School of Earth and Planetary Sciences

Listening Through Rock Salt: Quantifying Petrofabrics and Seismic Velocity Anisotropy of Evaporites to Improve Seismic Imaging

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DECLARATION

The thesis has been composed by me and the work presented is my own. All quotations have been distinguished as quotations and the sources of information specifically acknowledged. If any results were obtained partly in association with others, the nature and extent of this help, if substantial, was especially acknowledged.

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgement has been made.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

This thesis has been written as part of the Collaborative Doctoral Programme undertaken at Curtin University, Perth, Australia, and University of Aberdeen, Scotland, UK.

Signature: Date: 31st of August 2021

Johanna Heeb

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I acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land on which I live, work and study, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation. I recognise the contributions of the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation as the first scientists of this land. I am respectful of their Elder past, present and emerging, and acknowledge they are the keepers of the local traditional Whadjuk culture, stories, sites, and natural environments in this region.

The Covid-19 crisis that broke out in 2019 has had critical impact on this PhD project and my life.

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ABSTRACT

Evaporitic deposits and rock salt structures are part of many sedimentary basins worldwide and therefore often present on seismic reflection surveys. In seismic imaging, salt deposits are generally treated as homogenous bodies in regards to internal structure and composition (e.g., as halite, which is isotropic). However, in reality evaporitic rock salt formations are polymineralic, commonly incorporating anisotropic minerals such as anhydrite and gypsum, are structurally heterogeneous, and the minerals often display fabrics (crystallographic and shape preferred orientations; CPO and SPO, respectively). Yet, quantitative microstructural characterisation of natural polymineralic evaporites is understudied, and published seismic velocity data on these rock types are scarce. It is also unknown to what extent mineralogical, microstructural, and textural inhomogeneities and anisotropies contribute to P-and S-wave velocity anisotropy in rock salt. Especially the effects of grain boundaries, where grains in a rock have a shape preferred orientation (SPO), are not understood.

A new MATLABTM toolbox is presented for **G**rain **B**oundary **Pa**ttern **Q**uantification (GBPaQ) for automated quantification of SPO in 2D for any crystalline solid. The functionality of GBPaQ is showcased using a range of natural and simulated (from full-field viscoplasticity models) grain boundary patterns that have been incrementally deformed. Results are visualised as rose diagrams for grain fitted-ellipse axes, grain boundary segment orientations, and grain boundary segment intercept density. These provide a more complete, detailed pattern anisotropy quantification for single- and two-phase materials during progressive coaxial and non-coaxial deformation.

Two suites of natural evaporitic samples - Zechstein anhydrite (cores from the North Sea) and anhydrite + gypsum (outcrop samples from Òdena, South Pyrenean foreland basin, Spain) - are characterised for crystallographic preferred orientation (CPO, via electron backscatter diffraction EBSD) and SPO (via GBPaQ). The results are set into the context of measured ultrasonic wave velocity $(V_P \text{ and } V_S)$. The findings show a clear difference between the two sample types, with lower V_P and V_S velocities for Òdena samples. The *V^P* velocities are also slower than polycrystalline evaporite aggregate *V^P* values found in the literature. The observed and measured CPO, SPO, and gypsum filled veins in Òdena samples are likely influencing seismic wave velocity and thus, may cause seismic anisotropy.

Finally, the impact of stress on the hydration of polycrystalline anhydrite is investigated via triaxial deformation experiments on Òdena evaporites using a triaxial deformation apparatus, with post-experiment microstructural characterisation. Stressstrain data reveal that samples that underwent long steady state differential compaction are weaker. The microstructural analysis of samples shows that there is a strong temporal and spatial connection between the geometry, distribution, and evolution of fractures and hydration. The newly-formed gypsum locally shows a systematic crystallographic preferred orientation, likely due to selective inheritance of crystal orientations from favourably oriented wall-rock anhydrite grains, which minimizes the free energy necessary for nucleation under stress. A sequence is suggested for rapid hydration under stress that requires the development of fractures accompanied by localised hydration. Importantly, hydration of anhydrite to gypsum was achieved under triaxial stress over timescales of hours.

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- Chapter 4: Organisation, acquisition, preparation, and management of sample material. Sample preparation and analysis. Processing of results. Literature research. Writing and preparation of the manuscript. Conceptualisation and preparation of all Figures, except Figure 4.1.
- Chapter 5: Design, planning and execution of laboratory experiments. Literature research. Preparation and management of samples and acquisition of part of the samples. Analysis and processing of the results. Writing and preparation of the manuscript. Conceptualisation and preparation of Figures.
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GLOSSARY

THESIS INTRODUCTION

1.1 The significance of evaporitic rocks

Evaporitic deposits and rock salt structures are part of over 120 sedimentary basins worldwide, forming stratigraphic layers and diapirs, among other structures. Halite is by far the most abundant mineral in rock salt and its characteristics and rheology predominantly defines the behaviour of rock salt bodies. There are over eighty different evaporitic minerals recorded in marine evaporite deposits, with twelve being major constituents (Stewart, 1963). Table 1.1 lists the nine most important evaporitic minerals together with their basic properties. The low density of ~ 2.1 g cm⁻³ coupled with the fact that it can be mobilised and flow viscously under upper crustal conditions (\leq 5 km depth, T = \sim 20 to 200 °C, lithostatic pressure \leq 120 MPa) makes rock salt unique compared to other surface and near-surface rocks like carbonates and siliciclastic rocks. The modal composition of rock salt depends on the composition of the source liquid, the natural precipitation sequence of evaporite minerals, and the availability of water, brine, or other fluids.

Table 1.1: List of the most common evaporitic minerals of rock salt deposits (carbonates not included). CS – crystal system; MSH – Mohs scale hardness; ρ_M – mineral density in **g** cm⁻³; ρ_{BR} – bulk rock density in g cm⁻³; Vp – average compressional wave velocity in **ms-1;** *n.d.* **– no data available. *Wireline log rock densities after Urai et al***.* **(2008); **after Jones and Davison (2014).**

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The diverse polymineralic character and the ability to flow are both major reasons why natural rock salt very often develops high-level complexity of mineral compositions, fabrics, and microstructures. Ductile deformation has been studied successfully in laboratory experiments on rock salt (e.g., Carter and Heard, 1970; Poirier, 1985; Urai et al*.,* 1987; Spiers et al*.,* 1990; Franssen, 1994; Ter Heege et al*.,* 2005a,b; Pennock et al*.,* 2002; 2004; 2005; 2006; Armann, 2008; Wenk et al*.,* 2009; Desbois et al*.,* 2010; Linckens et al., 2016).

Rock salt deposits are generally weak compared to their surrounding siliciclastic or carbonate sediments, and this weakness can have a significant influence on the rheology of a basin (e.g., Heard and Rubey, 1966; Hildyard et al*.,* 2011a). Oil and gas are often trapped in reservoirs in or on the flanks of salt diapirs, as rock salt can form both structural traps and seals such as folds and faults (e.g., Hudec and Jackson, 2017). Understanding the deformation of mono- and polymineralic evaporites and how the resulting fabrics determine their petrophysical properties can be key to better imaging of salt bodies and their encasing rocks. There are typically chaotic reflectors and transparent zones in and around salt diapirs, which are a consequence of poorly implemented processing parameters. The resolution of structures adjacent to salt diapirs could be improved with better velocity models for natural salt.

Due to its ability to readily flow in a ductile way and seal cracks and fractures, rock salt is important not only for the oil and gas industry but also for nuclear, carbon dioxide, and hazardous waste, hydrogen, and compressed air storage for geo-energy applications (e.g., Hunsche and Hampel, 1999; Mertineit et al*.,* 2012; Singh et al*.,* 2018). As the strength and rheological behaviour of rock salt differs from most other sediments and rocks, it can be significant for mining salt, potash and other evaporitic minerals, civil engineering as well, for the stability and maintenance of tunnels or building sites (e.g., Sass and Burbaum, 2010; Singh et al*.,* 2018).

A principal aim of this study is the development of methods for the quantification of microstructures to improve the assessment of seismic anisotropy of evaporites. The quantification of microstructures also enables the study of the processes behind the formation and evolution of microstructures during salt rock deformation, as these are not yet fully understood. The quantification of microstructures is of major interest for

a vast field of geological questions to gain an understanding of how rocks (and other materials) deform, recrystallise, evolve, and behave.

Rock salt has the potential to serve as a useful analogue material that is deformable under laboratory conditions for relatable processes of the mantle and deep crustal rocks. Rock salt has been extensively used as an analogue for crustal rock deformation (e.g., silicates). Various quantification approaches for microstructures and fracture networks (e.g., Ramsay, 1976; Fry, 1979; Panozzo, 1984; 1987; Launeau and Robin, 1996; Volland and Kruhl, 2004; Kruhl, 2013; Healy et al*.,* 2017) have been employed to analyse shape preferred orientations and (in)homogeneity at different scales (Fig. 1.1).

Figure 1.1: Different types of quantification of a fracture pattern based on a field photograph by various methods. After Kruhl (2013). Light grey: areas where the fracture pattern is masked. Ellipses: regions where fractures become arrays of microfractures, invisible on the scale of the photograph. A) Disassembling of the pattern into segments for statistical treatment. B) Analysis of segments or spacing between parts of the pattern along scan lines for statistical treatments. C) Analysis of spacing or widths of planar parts of the pattern for statistical treatment. D) Sequence of intercepts between

the pattern and a scan-line, leading to a Cantor set. E) Application of box-counting, providing information about the arrangement of the pattern relative to each other, i.e., internal structure of the pattern. F) Box-counting applied to small areas that are shifted over the pattern for inhomogeneity analysis of the pattern. G) 1D methods, e.g., Cantor-Dust method. H) Combined quantification of inhomogeneity.

Microstructures control physical or mechanical rock characteristics and behaviour, for example, seismic anisotropy and mechanical strength. Microstructures are an intrinsic material property and as such play an active, central role in the evolution of a rock (Gottstein, 2004).

Imposed environmental factors like stress, pressure, and temperature have an influence on the spatial arrangement (e.g., grain size, grain shape, and phase distribution), crystal structure, and rheological properties of constituent phases (including fluids). In turn, these control rheological properties and the processes that may be active, like mineral phase transformations (e.g., hydration or dehydration reactions), and deformation mechanisms (e.g., dislocation creep, pressure solution, cataclasis) (e.g., Piazolo et al*.,* 2019; Gomez-Rivas et al., 2020). Together, environmental conditions, material characteristics, material reactivity, and dominance of deformation mechanisms/processes control the behaviour of a rock and ultimately the shape of its microstructures (Knipe, 1989).

Rock-forming grains and crystals are commonly non-equidimensional, leading to an aspect ratio of > 1 (here defined as longest axis/shortest axis of a grain). The shape of grains in rocks and crystalline materials is controlled by many factors, including mineral habit and primary grain growth, subsequent deformation, recrystallisation, mineral reactions (e.g., diagenetic, metamorphic reactions), and processes of erosion and transport of detrital grains.

Shape preferred orientation (SPO) is generally defined as a measure of the alignment of non-equidimensional grains in a rock or crystalline material and is a fundamental descriptor of material microstructures and petrofabrics (Panozzo, 1984; Passchier and Trouw, 2005; Launeau et al*.*, 2010). A SPO is a common feature of many natural rocks, ceramics, and metals, and can be formed either during rock formation, e.g., by magmatic flow alignment of crystals, deposition of sediments, for example under the influence of water or airflow, or as a consequence of deformation.

Quantification of SPO can provide useful information on the deformation history of polycrystalline aggregates, their diagenetic and metamorphic evolution, and the bulk strain field (Panozzo, 1987; Launeau and Robin, 1996; Berger et al*.*, 2011). The shape, size, and orientation arrangement of grains control the grain boundary microstructure. Grain boundary pattern anisotropy is dependent on the orientation and linked elongation of particles and grains. Grain boundary networks can have first-order effects on fluid flow, seismic wave attenuation, electrical properties, and strength of a material, among others. *Therefore, quantitative analysis of geometric characteristics of evolving grain boundary networks can provide powerful insights into our understanding of such processes, including deformation mechanisms.*

In seismic imaging, salt deposits are generally treated as homogeneous bodies in regard to their internal structure and their composition, which is often assumed to be pure halite. Such homogeneous models have a certain validity because halite is the main constituent in natural rock salt bodies with an abundance of \sim 95 % (Raymer and Kendall, 1997). The diverse polymineralic character and ability to flow are both major aspects of why natural rock salt bodies very often develop a range of mineral compositions, fabrics, and microstructures. Rock salt bodies generally show high-level structural complexity, including anisotropic characteristics, and associated large velocity contrasts (Raymer and Kendall, 1997).

Single crystals of all evaporite minerals are anisotropic in their elastic properties (Raymer and Kendall, 1997; Raymer et al*.,* 2000a,b). All minerals are by nature elastically anisotropic, caused by directional variations of atomic bonds in their crystal lattice structure (e.g., Healy et al*.,* 2020). Variations in single-crystal elastic properties result in directional variations in ultrasonic wave velocity and polarization directions, so-called seismic anisotropy, which mimic the crystal symmetry of the mineral (Fig. 1.2; e.g., Vargas-Meleza et al*.,* 2015).

Different types of seismic anisotropy, of P-wave velocity (*VP*), both polarized S-waves velocities (Vs_1 (fast), Vs_2 (slow)), and S-wave splitting (ΔVs) anisotropy, can be derived from elastic constants (Mainprice, 1990; Mainprice and Humbert, 1994; Lloyd and Kendall, 2005). The anisotropy in seismic P-wave velocities of each phase is different, with 5700 m s⁻¹ for gypsum (36 % anisotropy) and 6500 m s⁻¹ (Jones and Davison, 2014; Table 1.1) for anhydrite (43 % anisotropy) (Table 1.1 and Fig. 1.2).

It is known that evaporitic minerals, and consequently evaporitic deposits, are seismically anisotropic.

However, up to now research has not been extensive enough to allow the quantification of the effect different structural and compositional rock characteristics have on seismic velocity anisotropy.

Figure 1.2: Single crystal ultrasonic velocity anisotropy for halite, anhydrite, and gypsum calculated using the AnisoVis MATLABTM Toolbox (Healy et al*.***, 2020), plotted as 3D surfaces (left) and equal area, lower hemisphere, stereographic projections (right)** **relative to the mineral form.** A) Unit cell, B) *P*-wave group velocity (V_P) , C) fast *S*-wave **group velocity (** V_{SI} **), D) slow S-wave group velocity (** V_{S2} **), E) shear-wave splitting (** ΔV_S **). Seismic properties were calculated using single-crystal elastic properties (Bass, 1995). Note that the velocity distribution reflects the symmetry class of each mineral. Minimum (min), maximum (max), and Voigt-Reuss-Hill (VRH) average values are indicated below the projections.**

In polycrystalline aggregate es, seismic velocity anisotropy is commonly demonstrated to be dominated by the crystallographic alignment of all mineral constituents, which is equivalent to the dependence on the overall intrinsic crystal structure of the sum of all grains. Structural features like content, orientation, and alignment of grain boundaries (SPO), cracks, or pores can also have a major impact on seismic velocity anisotropy (e.g.*,* Crampin, 1985; Lo et al*.,* 1986; Popp and Kern, 1998; Raymer and Kendall, 1998; Mah and Schmitt, 2003; Healy et al*.*, 2009; Lloyd et al*.,* 2011; Zong et al*.,* 2014).

Other factors that have a strong influence are variations in the spatial distribution of phases, changing phase content proportions (Llorens et al*.,* 2020), layering, grain size, and shape fabrics (e.g.*,* Kern and Wenk, 1985). Published seismic velocity data on non-halite and polymineralic evaporites are extremely rare, numbering just a handful of studies (Levin, 1979; Ross et al*.,* 1987; Raymer and Kendall, 1997; 1998; Raymer et al*.,* 2000a,b; Tripetta et al*.,* 2010; Vargas-Meleza et al*.,* 2015). Furthermore, the extent to which mineralogical and textural variations contribute to seismic velocity anisotropy effects in evaporites remains understudied.

An outstanding issue for investigating the contribution of SPO to velocity anisotropy is the definition of an appropriate quantitative measure of SPO fit for this purpose.

The behaviour of evaporites under stress is important for understanding the strength and rheology of evaporites and, by extension, evaporite-bearing sedimentary basins and fold/thrust belts (e.g., Hildyard et al*.,* 2011a). Stress has a critical impact on grain boundary and fracture interface processes and can therefore influence the transmission of fluids, grain boundary dissolution/precipitation, and crack/seal processes, which are all considered important in evaporite bodies. Yet, the response of evaporites under stress remains understudied.

Hydration is a process that is linked to mechanical strength. Anhydrite and gypsum are, next to halite, two of the most common minerals in evaporitic deposits. Both are part of the CaSO4 H2O system, where the general mineralogy and structure depend on the first order of the water content (hydration stage). Three main phases represent different degrees of hydration: from most to least hydrated, these are gypsum (dihydrate; $CaSO_4*2H_2O$), bassanite (hemihydrate; $CaSO_4*0.5H_2O$), and anhydrite (anhydrous form; CaSO4). Hydration of anhydrite and dehydration of gypsum in evaporitic deposits are common processes that depend on the availability of water (e.g., Farnsworth, 1925; De Paola et al*.,* 2007; Bedford, 2017).

Therefore, it is important to understand the conditions at which hydration occurs and study the role of stress in the process.

The process of dehydration of gypsum to anhydrite has received considerable attention in experimental studies (Olgaard et al., 1995; Ko et al., 1995; 1997; Wang and Wong 2003; Milsch and Scholz 2005; Milsch et al., 2011; Llana-Fúnez et al., 2012; Leclère et al., 2016). Publications focussing on the hydration of anhydrite to gypsum are limited to either laboratory studies of particles rather than polycrystalline aggregates, or anhydrite polycrystalline aggregates under hydrostatic conditions (e.g.*,* Ramsdell and Partridge, 1929; Conley and Bundy, 1958; Hardie, 1967; Sievert et al*.,* 2005; Fig. 1.3). However, laboratory experiments under hydrostatic conditions have also failed to produce hydration, even over durations of months (Hardie, 1967).

1.2 Aims and objectives

The main aim of this thesis is to study the link between petrofabrics and seismic anisotropy, with a focus on the quantification of grain boundary patterns, evaporite petrofabrics, and experimental hydration of anhydrite to gypsum under stress. This is achieved via the following specific objectives:

- 1. To investigate and develop a new method to quantify grain boundary networks
- 2. To evaluate this method against data from controlled numerical experiments
- 3. To investigate the links between seismic velocity anisotropy and the diversity of microstructures found in naturally deformed evaporites
- 4. To investigate the role of stress, rather than pressure, in the hydration of anhydrite to gypsum

1.3 Thesis structure

The thesis is written as research chapters that are individual draft manuscripts and include topic specific introductions that outline the published literature and state of art for each field of research. Therefore, this thesis does not contain an independent literature review chapter. The main body of this thesis is comprised of chapters 2 to 5. All chapters are in preparation for submission for publication in international journals. The order of chapters is such that a quantification methodology is developed in chapters 2 and 3. Chapter 4 applies this method to natural samples and relates the results to seismic velocity measurements. Chapter 5 uses samples analysed in chapter 4 for experimental investigation of hydration under stress. Discussion and conclusions of the thesis are presented in chapter 6.

CHAPTER 2

Grain boundary networks and Shape preferred orientation – A fresh angle on pattern quantification

This chapter presents a new, automated $MATLAB^{TM}$ toolbox named GBPaQ that incorporates different methods for grain boundary pattern quantification for applications like seismic wave attenuation estimation. Furthermore, a minimum

intensity of grain boundary intercepts (*Imin*) is introduced as a new parameter for the quantitative analysis of SPO strength.

GBPaQ is tested on two example grain boundary patterns, including a granular texture and a foam texture that have been manually stretched and analysed stepwise to analyse their SPO evolution. The results show that a combination of grain-fitted ellipse, grain boundary segment orientation, and grain boundary segment intercept density rose diagrams provide a complete, detailed quantification of grain boundary pattern anisotropy.

We find that such a combination of complementary methods might unlock the identification and quantification of complex patterns and the study of other microstructural grain boundary characteristics linked to deformation mechanisms, multiple phases with different viscosity, local or directional inhomogeneity, or strain geometry.

The minimum intensity (Imin) provides a powerful tool to track the homogeneous deformation history of polycrystalline aggregates if plotted against the average axial ratio of grain-fitted ellipses (r).

CHAPTER 3

Grain boundary (shape) evolution of single and dual-phase aggregates during plane-strain deformation – Combining numerical simulations with grain boundary intercept based SPO quantification

This study focuses on the application of grain boundary segment-based SPO analysis, developed in chapter 2, to simulated, evolving microstructures. Such analysis unlocks a new understanding of SPO pattern development during progressive shear and in single and two-phase materials.

Viscoplastic numerical simulations of single- and two-phase materials are used to generate grain boundary patterns with pre-defined characteristics that are deformed under different boundary conditions. Eight distinct numerical deformation simulations were run to a finite natural strain of up to 2 in 100 time steps. These models used dislocation glide and the strain geometry end-members of simple shear and pure shear on single- and two-phase foam texture grain boundary networks, with coarse and fine grain sizes.

General trends and patterns observed during deformation include grain elongation and rotation according to the applied strain geometry and increasing preferred orientation distribution. Grain boundary segment orientation and density analysis show that SPO is weaker in two-phase models at the same natural strain. The two-phase models consistently have weaker SPOs compared to single viscosity models. The grains with lower viscosity become elongated several orders of magnitude faster and form sigmoidal clasts.

The resultant microstructures manifest as distinctive shapes of grain boundary intercept density contour plots, with distinct characteristics for different strain geometry end-members and single and dual viscosity models.

CHAPTER 4

Effects of mixed phase content, fractures, and grain boundary anisotropy on acoustic wave velocities in evaporites

The study combines ultrasonic velocity measurements on cuboids and cores of natural evaporites with different mineral compositions and microstructures with the methodology developed in chapters 2 and 3. Velocity data from measurements on natural evaporites with halite, polyhalite, anhydrite, gypsum, and mixed phase rocks from three deposits is presented. Crystallographic preferred orientation (CPO) analysis of two sample sets (pure anhydrite and anhydrite with gypsum content) shows CPO is higher in pure anhydrite compared to mixed anhydrite with gypsum sample material, with microstructures and impact of deformation differing between the two. The V_P and *VS* ranges are generally lower than expected from single crystal ranges (that relate to crystallographic orientation), indicating other contributions to velocity variations than simply intrinsic mineralogical anisotropy.

New velocity data for natural evaporites is presented, with velocity anisotropy (AVP) up to 60 % AVP and 34 % AVS %. A workflow is introduced that combines CPO analysis with fracture analysis, grain boundary network analysis, and grain boundary intercept-based methods.

Rapid hydration and weakening under stress - Implications for Earth Systems

This chapter uses sample material from chapter 4 to study the effects of triaxial stress on the hydration of samples of polycrystalline anhydrite in laboratory experiments. Steady state differential compaction, dry and 'wet' tests under confining pressure, and axial stress were conducted to investigate the influence of stress on hydration in anhydrite-gypsum aggregates. Characterization of the samples before and, where possible, after triaxial experiments were performed with optical and scanning electron microscopy, including energy dispersive spectroscopy and electron backscatter diffraction mapping.

Stress-strain data reveals that samples that underwent steady state differential compaction are mechanically weaker. The microstructural analysis shows that there is a strong temporal and spatial connection between the geometry, distribution, and evolution of fractures and hydration. Newly-formed vein gypsum locally exhibits a systematic crystallographic preferred orientation, which is not always topotactically linked to the wall-rock anhydrite. Selective inheritance of crystal orientations from favourably oriented wall-rock anhydrite grains is proposed to lead to systematic crystal orientation in the new gypsum veins.

These findings imply that non-hydrostatic stress has a significant influence on hydration rates and subsequent mechanical strength of rocks. This phenomenon is applicable across a wide range of geological environments in Earth's crust and upper mantle.
CHAPTER 2

Grain boundary networks and shape preferred orientation – A fresh angle on pattern quantification

Abstract

A quantitative understanding of grain shape preferred orientation (SPO) and grain boundary networks as fundamental characteristics of rocks and other crystalline solids is of major interest in geology and material science. Grain boundary networks contain useful information on the deformation history of polycrystalline aggregates, and their diagenetic and metamorphic histories. SPO can have major impact on material characteristics such as permeability, acoustic velocity and mechanical strength, and as reaction surfaces.

The objective of this study is to present a semi-automated toolbox of MATLABTM scripts, named Grain Boundary Pattern Quantification (GBPaQ), that incorporates different methods for grain boundary pattern quantification for application to, for example, seismic wave attenuation estimation. GBPaQ is tested on two example grain boundary patterns, a granular texture and a foam texture with equant grains, which have been digitally stretched (deformed) to analyse their SPO evolution.

The results show that a combination of grain ellipse, grain boundary segment orientation, and grain boundary segment intercept density rose diagrams provide a complete, detailed quantification of grain boundary pattern anisotropy. Grain boundary segment intercepts (GBSI) analysis using GBPaQ yields a new grain boundary pattern parameter – the minimum intensity of grain boundary intercepts (*Imin*) – which follows a power law relationship with the average axial ratio of grain-fitted ellipses (*r*) during SPO development.

We propose that *I_{min}* can be used for the quantitative analysis of SPO strength as a useful tool to assess the deformation history of polycrystalline aggregates. Further studies involving a broader range of different patterns and strain histories are necessary to fully investigate the potential of (I_{min}) versus *r* diagrams.

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2.1 Introduction

Rock-forming grains and crystals are commonly non-equidimensional, leading to an aspect ratio > 1 (aspect ratio here defined as longest axis divided by the shortest axis). The shape of grains in rocks and crystalline materials is controlled by many factors, including mineral habit and primary grain growth, deformation, recrystallisation, mineral reactions (e.g., diagenetic, metamorphic), and processes of erosion and transport of detrital grains. The shape preferred orientation (SPO) is generally defined as a measure of the alignment of non-equidimensional grains in a rock or crystalline material and is a fundamental descriptor of material microstructures and petrofabrics (Panozzo, 1984; Passchier and Trouw, 2005; Launeau et al*.*, 2010).

An SPO in a rock can be formed either during rock formation, e.g., by magmatic flow alignment of crystals or vesicles (Herrero-Bervera et al., 2001), alignment of particles during sediment deposition (Mulchrone and Meere, 2015), or as a consequence of deformation, and is a common feature of many natural rocks, ceramics, and metals. As such, quantification of SPO can provide useful information on the deformation history of polycrystalline aggregates, their diagenetic and metamorphic evolution, and the bulk strain field (Panozzo, 1987; Launeau and Robin, 1996; Berger et al*.*, 2011). Furthermore, SPO can have a major impact on material characteristics, especially the anisotropy of mechanical and petrophysical properties, such as permeability, acoustic velocity, and mechanical strength.

The shape, size, and orientation arrangement of grains control the grain boundary microstructure. Given that grain boundaries are inherently weaker than grains, they can be transmissive to fluids, and can be sites of diffusion of vacancies, elements, and reactive transport (Urai et al., 2008). Accordingly, grain boundary networks exert a primary influence on the mechanical strength, permeability, and reactivity of a rock or material. The orientation of grain boundaries may also be used to define an SPO.

Grain boundary pattern quantification requires reliable resolution of grain boundaries via imaging (Launeau et al., 1990; Jähne, 1993; Bartozzi et al., 2000; Lebichot et al., 2005; Pirard and Sardini, 2011). A full description of an SPO should consider three dimensions because grains are 3D objects. However, our view of microstructures is often restricted to 2D surfaces, such as 2D outcrops and thin sections, and therefore SPO quantification techniques are most commonly developed for 2D analyses.

While 3D methods are being developed (e.g., FIB-SEM etc.), and the results are valuable, there is a "legacy database" of thousands of 2D thin sections and images. The take from this "legacy database" ought to be maximised. Manual recording (tracing) of different grain boundary patterns may take up to fifty times as long as digital processing and automated recording (Peternell and Kruhl, 2009; Kruhl, 2013).

The most established approaches to SPO quantification rely on the identification of grains, and other fabric objects such as xenoliths, clasts, or pebbles, as discrete objects (Webber, 2012), followed by the representation of their shapes as ellipses (in 2D) or ellipsoids (in 3D), which can be plotted on a Flinn plot (Flinn, 1962), a R_f/ϕ plot (Dunnet, 1969; Ramsay, 1976; Ramsay and Huber, 1983; Lisle, 1985), or as rose diagrams of grain long axis azimuths (in 2D). Moreover, the analysis of the positions of the ellipse centroids via the centre-to-centre method (Ramsay, 1976), its successor the Delaunay Triangulation Nearest Neighbour Method, and the Fry method (Fry, 1979) allow the finite strain ellipse (or ellipsoid in 3D) to be reconstructed (Sorby, 1849; Harker, 1885 and Becker, 1893).

A hyperbolic vector mean method has been introduced to expand ellipse-based 2D strain analysis to incorporate hyperbolic (non-Euclidean) geometry (e.g., Yamaji, 2008; 2013a,b; Vollmer, 2018). This can be applied to data from, i.e., *Rf/ϕ*, centre-tocentre, and kinematic vorticity analysis, and equal area and gnomonic projections of the hyperboloid is demonstrably useful for estimating the optimal strain and its error by means of formal statistical methodology (e.g., Yamaji, 2008; 2013a,b; Vollmer, 2018).

Grain-based SPO approaches are recognised for being effective to derive principal strain axes from a population of deformed grains or objects, and are established tools for strain analysis (Webber, 2012; Kruhl, 2013). However, much information about the grain boundary network (pattern) is lost when grains are approximated as ellipses or in grain centroid approaches, highlighting the need for more sophisticated approaches for describing the geometry of grain boundary networks (or patterns) more thoroughly (Kruhl, 2013).

Methods for quantifying grain boundary patterns include those that analyse grain boundary attribute statistics, such as segment lengths and azimuths, and those that quantify grain boundary distribution statistics, such as intercepts along scan lines.

Quantification of grain boundary segment orientation distributions (e.g., as grain boundary tensors) is advantageous because it does not rely on any geometric simplifications. A limitation of statistical analysis of the length and orientation of 'line elements' via cumulated frequency distributions (e.g., Sanderson, 1977; Sanderson and Phillips, 1987) is the loss of relationships of grain boundary segments relative to each other, grain size, and grain ellipticity (Kruhl, 2013).

Grain boundary-based scan line quantification methods, such as the (inverse) SURFOR method of Panozzo (1983, 1984, 1987), intercept method of Launeau and Robin (1996) or the Cantor-dust method (Volland and Kruhl, 2004), include more information about the shape and size of grains and pattern characteristics by analysing the relationship between the pattern and the scan line orientation. Scan lines preserve a detailed evaluation but are limited to the features in the pattern section that they capture (Kruhl, 2013).

The automated version of the SURFOR wheel from Panozzo (1984; 1987) has been implemented by the introduction of the SURFOR code (Heilbronner and Barrett, 2014). This FORTRAN program was created to quantify fabrics defined by linear traces of grain surfaces from section images, and as such is ultimately a 2-D limited tool. The SURFOR method has been used in hundreds of publications and has been applied to solve many geological problems (Herwegh et al., 1999; Molli and Heilbronner, 1999; Stipp et al., 2002; Kilian et al., 2011). These methods are commonly used to analyse SPO and strain in granites (Stein, 2000; Kurz, 2005; Vigneresse, 2015; Thabet et al., 2017), eclogites (Mauler et al., 2001; Pleuger et al., 2003); Kurz et al., 2004), mylonites (Stünitz and Gerald, 1993; Trullenque et al., 2006) and very common in marble and limestones (Schweigl and Neubauer, 1997; Molli et al., 2000; Cantisani et al., 2009). Some studies use the SURFOR approach to study hydration reactions (Marti et al., 2018a; 2018b).

The *intercept method* is one of the oldest methods for quantitative analysis of grain boundary pattern anisotropy (Launeau and Robin, 1996), was first suggested by Saltykov (1958), and later used in stereology by Underwood (1970) and is based on counting intercepted grain boundary segments along parallel sets of scan lines that are rotated systematically. The number of boundaries that are intercepted along a scan line is called the intercept number.

The most successful version of an intercept-based pattern quantification method is that developed by Launeau and Robin (1996), following Launeau et al. (1990) and followed by Launeau and Robin (2005) and Launeau et al. (2010). Launeau and Robin (1996) added the Fourier analysis of intercept count to the intercept method. Fast Fourier Transform is part of autocorrelation and rose of intercept length (Launeau and Robin, 1996). A great advantage of this method is that that direction-dependent pattern characteristics can be quantified, and this is especially important to link microstructures with the physical and mechanical behaviour of rocks in terms of seismic wave attenuation, deformation, or materials engineering.

Scan line-based methods are more selective because they utilize fragmented orientation and sectional results, depending on the position, angle, and length of scan lines. Information is lost by most scan line-based quantification approaches, because of the 10° angle between scan lines or the gaps between parallel scan lines in a grid. In general, scan line-based methods are strong for fast SPO quantification in simple patterns (Panozzo, 1983; 1984; 1987; Srivastava, 1995; Launeau and Robin, 1996).

The scan line and grain boundary-based quantification methods from Panozzo (1984; 1987) and Launeau and Robin (1996) are commonly applied to geological and other patterns for quantification analysis of finite strain and anisotropy, including seismic anisotropy (Lee and Jung, 2015; Jung et al., 2020; Kim and Jung, 2020). They are also applied to studies involving anisotropic magnetic susceptibility (Launeau and Cruden, 1998; Jayangondaperumal and Dubey, 2001).

The Cantor-Dust (or Cantor-Set) method was first proposed as a concept by Velde et al. (1990) and Harris et al. (1991). It is a method that combines boundary intercepts and grain size to describe a pattern. The method uses the distance between intercepts rather than the number of intercepts and is often used to analyse fractures or fracture spacing (Gerik and Kruhl, 2009). Volland and Kruhl (2004) modified the method for fractal pattern quantification and automated as software tool AMOCADO by Gerik and Kruhl (2009). Yet, published automated grain boundary pattern quantification software are limited by inherent simplifications in approach that omit important details of the patterns. The specific aim of this study is to introduce GBPaQ, a new collection, or toolbox, of MATLABTM programs, developed from FracPaO (Healy et al., 2017) for the automated quantitative analysis of grain boundary patterns.

To illustrate and compare SPO quantification methods, two initial grain boundary patterns with narrow ranges in initial grain size distributions and low initial grain axial ratios were stretched, and the changes in SPOs tracked. GBPaQ requires vector graphic input. In this contribution we first introduce the GBPaQ approach and method and then demonstrate it using two different examples of grain boundary patterns.

2.2 Material and methods

2.2.1 Case studies

To illustrate grain boundary segment-based SPO quantification, two 2D grain boundary patterns have been selected (Fig. 2.5; Appendix A) as examples: a polycrystalline aggregate microstructure comprising grains with a high degree of roundness ('Granular') derived from an ELLE microdynamic numerical model published in Piazolo et al. (2019), and a polycrystalline foam texture based on an electron backscatter diffraction map of a sintered zirconia ceramic sample ('Foam').

The granular pattern was originally created to simulate trace element diffusion with fractionation during surface-energy driven grain boundary migration (Jessell et al*.*, 2003; Steinbach et al*.*, 2016; Llorens et al*.*, 2019; Piazolo et al., 2019). It provides an example of a pattern with very low initial grain aspect ratios and minor variations in grain size distribution, whereas the grain shapes in 'Foam' are highly polygonal with relatively straight boundaries, minor variations in grain size, and homogeneous distribution (Table 2.1).

Both patterns have very low variance in grain size, low SPO strength, relatively simple grain boundary patterns, and different grain shape symmetries. The patterns are mapped manually via a vector graphics program to create datasets in SVG file format for analysis with linear grain boundary line segments. Equivalent circular diameter (ECD) and axial ratio (*r*) are calculated from data analysis of these maps with freely available raster graphics software (ImageJ; Schneider et al*.*, 2012).

Table 2.1: Selection criteria of the primary patterns. *s* **= number of segments in a pattern; #grains = number of whole grains per sample;** *n***ECD = equivalent circular diameter normalized to 1;** *n***SD = normalized standard deviation;** *r* **= grain aspect ratio.**

Sample		$\#$ grains	$nECD \pm nSD$	$r \pm SD$
'Granular'	5293	657	1 ± 0.39	$.38 \pm 0.33$
'Foam'	5925	953	1 ± 0.50	⊥.59±0.50

To study evolution of SPO, grain boundary segment azimuths, and scan line intercept density, the two initial texture patterns are incrementally 'stretched' in the horizontal direction (using a vector graphics program) by 5 %, 10 %, and 50 %, whereas the vertical dimension is held constant.

These stretches do not simulate isochoric strain, as the area (and therefore volume in 3D) of the grains, and therefore the grain size, increases with progressive deformation. As such, these strains are analogous to x-y plane views of plane-strain deformation.

2.2.2 Grain boundary segment-based automated analysis with GBPaQ

In this study, grain boundary patterns were analysed using a customised version of the $MATLABTM$ toolbox FracPaQ, originally designed to quantify fracture patterns (Healy et al*.*, 2017), and renamed GBPaQ (**G**rain **B**oundary **P**attern **Q**uantification).

Grain boundary attribute distributions and spatial variations are quantified based on the length and angle of line segments that comprise a pattern, displayed as segment angle (azimuth) rose diagrams, optionally length-weighted, and grain boundary (or fabric) $2nd$, $4th$ and higher ranked tensors, based on the formulations of Oda (1983) (for applications see also Suzuki et al*.,* 1998; and Brown and Bruhn, 1998).

FracPaO uses a 2nd rank tensor approximation and calculates the anisotropy of permeability in 2D by default, and GBPaQ uses the same approach. In GBPaQ, fabric tensors are calculated using the density of segments (number per unit area), squared lengths of segments, and the orientation matrix of Woodstock (1977).

In GBPaQ, the analysis of the grain boundary segments by azimuth and the resulting rose diagram shows that the longest axis of the fitted ellipse and the vector that marks the circular mean, or mean segment orientation (MSO), have the same angle. Yet it captures more detailed pattern geometries compared to the grain-fitted ellipse-based approach (Fig. 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Grain boundary segment analysis of a single grain. a) Grain with longest physical dimension and the fitted ellipse with the longest axis. b) All grain boundary segments of the same grain, coloured and sorted by their strike. c) Equal area rose plot of the grain boundary segment orientations.

2.2.3 Scan line and intercept-based analysis of grain boundary segments

The basic concept of SPO analysis using scan lines is that a scan line parallel to the preferred grain elongation orientation of a pattern crosses less grain boundaries than in any other orientation.

The distance between grain boundary segments depends to a first order, on grain size, grain shape, grain boundary symmetry, the pattern geometry (sum of all grain boundary geometries in the pattern), and pattern homogeneity (grain size sorting, foliation domains, etc.).

The presence of multiple phases and their specific differences in grain symmetries, sizes and shapes are also a factor for the characteristics of a grain boundary pattern. Grain size, intercept density and intensity variations are important in terms of the number of crossed segments: the more grains, the bigger the dataset, the more holistic the resulting description of a pattern, assuming it is homogeneous. Therefore, grain boundary pattern analysis should be conducted relative to grain size to analyse a statistically robust number of grains.

For grain boundaries described by a segment, length and angle are the key characteristics that need to be included in any method that attempts to quantify grain boundary-based pattern characteristics. A pattern with a well-defined SPO generally consists of long segments (or more numerous segments of equal lengths) parallel to the direction of SPO, and shorter segments with increasing angular deviation from the SPO orientation. This relationship gets more pronounced with increasing SPO strength.

It is statistically less likely to cross a short segment than a long one, with increasing angular difference (up to 90°) to the scan line. However, the likelihood of intercepting closely spaced grain boundary segments increases normal to the SPO direction, which increases intercept density in these scan line orientations.

For any given analysis or a grain boundary pattern, the position and number of scan lines have a statistical impact and determine if the analysis describes a sample in 1D, 2D, or 3D space (Fig. 2.2). A single scan line provides a 1D description of the grain boundary density. Several parallel scan lines provide a 2D component to pattern quantification, but only describe the intercept density in one direction.

Robust use of scan lines in 2D pattern analysis involves two concepts: a centre approach, where the scan lines rotate around a centre, and a grid approach, where a set of parallel scan lines is simultaneously rotated. The angle between scan lines in a centre approach and the angle increment of grid rotation matter in terms of the precision and scale at which the pattern is analysed.

Figure 2.2: Basic considerations for scan line distribution for 1D measurement and optional grid and radial scan line distribution for 2D method application.

2.2.4 Grain boundary pattern analysis

Analysis of the initial grain boundary patterns and each stretch increment was conducted using three different approaches. The first one is based on the fitted ellipse of grains. The length and angle of the fitted ellipse longest grain axis and axial ratio of the longest and shortest axis of the fitted ellipse are calculated with ImageJ.

The mean intensity direction with 95 % confidence interval (MR dir'n) was calculated from the long axis of the fitted ellipse with GEOrient. The mean intensity is the direction of the resultant to the (unit) vectors describing the directions (Fischer, 1993; Mardia and Jupp, 2000). All directions are rounded to integer values and the mean resultant is given to the nearest integer direction.

The 95 % confidence interval of the mean direction is an estimate, based on the percentiles of the wrapped normal distribution using circular standard error after Fischer (1993). The generated angles and rose diagrams are displayed counterclockwise with respect to the horizontal X, which corresponds to 0°. This was adjusted so that X is vertical and a clockwise display of angles is used.

The second approach to display the data is by showing angles and lengths of each segment in the patterns using equal area rose plots generated by GBPaQ, and uses code from FracPaQ (Healy et al., 2017). The mean segment orientation (MSO) or circular mean, is calculated for each pattern but is only truly valid for unimodal distributions.

The third approach uses grain boundary segment intercepts (GBSIs) by scan lines to identify the orientation of the minimum GBSI density *α* and the maximum GBSI density *ɣ* (Table 2.2) via GBPaQ.

Symbol	Description
\mathbf{r}	Average axial ratio of grain-fitted ellipses
\boldsymbol{N}	Number of segment intercepts
θ	Scan line angle (between 0 to 180° from an arbitrary reference frame)
$d\beta$	Angular intervals between scan lines
\boldsymbol{n}	Total number of scan lines with the same orientation
l	Total length of all scan lines
α	Orientation of scan line(s) with minimum segment intercept density
Y	Orientation of scan line(s) with maximum segment intercept density
ϕ	Angle between minimum and maximum segment intercept scan lines
$N(\alpha)$	Minimum number of segment intercepts
N(y)	Maximum number of segment intercepts
$\bar{x}N$	Average number of segment intercepts (total number of intercepts divided by
	number of scan lines)
$D_L(\theta)$	Orientation dependent segment intercept density (number of intercepts along one
	scan line orientation divided by scan line length of scan line(s) with this
	orientation)
$\bar{X}D_L(\theta)$	Average orientation dependent segment intercept density (grid approach)
$\bar{x}N_L(\theta)$	Average number of orientation dependent segment intercepts (grid approach)
$D_L(\alpha)$	Minimum segment intercept density
$D_L(\gamma)$	Maximum segment intercept density
Imin	Minimum intensity

Table 2.2: List of symbols and abbreviations used.

GBPaQ analysis consists of two parts. The first is the approach used for fracture patterns in FracPaQ (Healy et al., 2017) and based on line statistics derived from coordinate geometry. Uploaded patterns are coloured for segment azimuth and a grain boundary tensor can be calculated in the same way as a crack tensor. The output options include grain boundary length histograms, density maps, and orientation rose diagrams (Healy et al., 2017). Further, the patterns are entirely deconstructed, i.e., the grain boundary segments were removed from their spatial context, and the segment length and azimuth are statistically analysed and plotted as segment orientation rose diagrams (Fig. 2.1c). The second part is a grain boundary intercept-based analysis (Fig. 2.2).

GBPaQ in its current form has an automated radial centre setting, so that it runs one rotation centre intercept analysis with 360 orientation steps per semicircle ($d\beta$ = 0.5°, adjustable) (Fig. 2.3). The GBSI density is calculated per pixel and displayed as a GBSI density contour rose (equal area). GBPaQ scan lines in this setting have constant length, defined by the smallest dimension of the input pattern image. A radial line scan is placed in the middle of the uploaded pattern. The interval between scan lines *dβ* can be defined.

Figure 2.3: Screenshot of GBPaQ software graphical interface and output figures specific to GBPaQ. a) GBPaQ main application window with input of the original (100 % stretch) 'Granular' pattern as SVG file. b) Grain boundary pattern map with segments coloured by azimuth. c) Grain boundary segment orientation rose, not length-weighted, analysis utilizes FracPaQ code. d) GBSI density contour plot from analysis with scan line interval *dβ* **= 1°. e) Grain boundary segment orientation rose of segments intercepted along** *α* **and** *γ***, length-weighted.**

GBSIs are counted along scan lines and reported as total numbers, intercepts per pixel, and in a GBSI density rose diagram. The GBSI density can be calculated in any chosen unit and scale. The GBSI density contour rose also shows the maximum and minimum segment intercept density orientations α and γ (intensity and azimuth).

The average GBSI density $\bar{x}D_{L}(\theta)$ is marked by a circular line on rose plots. Values for intensity and azimuth of intercepts for maximum, minimum and average intercept number and density are annotated. Two additional roses show azimuth and intensity of the grain boundary segments intercepted in *α* and *γ*.

2.3 Theory / calculation

The SPO equivalent direction of minimum number of grain boundary segment intercepts can be used to calculate a minimum intensity *Imin* (Eq. 1; Table 2.2), which relates the minimum number of grain boundary segment intercepts $N(\alpha)$ to the average number of grain boundary segment intercepts $\bar{x}N$. $\bar{x}N$ is the total number of intercepted grain boundary segments over all profiles (scan lines) divided by the number of profiles:

$$
I_{\min} = \frac{N(\alpha)}{\bar{x}N} \tag{1}
$$

 I_{min} as a rule ranges between 0 and 1, where 1 equals $\bar{x}N$, the average. The closer to 1, the weaker the SPO. With *Imin* decreasing towards 0, the SPO strength increases. This calculation allows *Imin* to be a dimensionless, independent value useful to compare several patterns with different characteristics. *Imin* combines grain orientation distribution and elongation. This form of minimum intensity calculation requires that the length of all scan lines is equal. It can be adapted for multiple radial scan line centres and adjusted for variation of scan line length using GBSI density instead of number of intercepts.

The total number of GBSIs over multiple scan lines with the same orientation *(θ)* can be defined as $\sum_{i=1}^{n} N(\theta)$. The total number of scan lines in orientation θ is defined as *n*. *N(θ)* stands for the total number of GBSIs by one scan line with orientation *θ*. For the average number of GBSIs, the total number of GBSIs is divided by the total number of scan lines (constant length) used.

For a grid scenario, it is more efficient to use scan lines with different lengths, and therefore use GBSI density as a measure. The total number of GBSIs of all scan lines in one orientation, $N(\theta)$, is divided by the total length *(l)* of all scan lines $(\sum_{i=1}^{n} l_i)$ with that orientation to calculate the total orientation dependent grain boundary segment density *DL(θ)*:

$$
D_L(\theta) = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n N(\theta)}{\sum_{i=1}^n l_i} \tag{2}
$$

The average number of orientation dependent GBSIs divided by scan line length of one scan line, under the condition that the scan line length is consistent, gives the average orientation dependent grain boundary segment density $\bar{x}D_{L}(\theta)$ for that orientation:

$$
\bar{x}D_L(\theta) = \frac{\bar{x}N_L(\theta)}{l_{(\theta)}}
$$
 [3]

2.4 Results

The 'Granular' initial pattern does not preserve a SPO by all methods (Fig. 2.4a). The long axis fitted ellipse orientation includes a maximum azimuth magnitude that covers 8.7 % of the data at 38°, with the mean segment orientation (MSO) at 29°. The GBSI density rose is uniformly rounded in shape overall, *α* is 28.5°, respectively.

The 'Foam' initial pattern (Fig. 2.4b) shows a stronger fitted ellipse long axis preferred orientation with the maximum azimuth magnitude of 12.2 % and a well-defined 'neck' perpendicular to the maximum segment. The segment orientation rose has a distinct symmetry with a rhombic shape. The shape of the GBSI density contour rose is almost hexagonal, with straight flanks and several maxima, and α at 135.5°.

Incremental stretching of both initial patterns resulted in the systematic development of SPO (Fig. 2.4c,d). During the steps, the maximum azimuth magnitude of the long axis orientation rose increases to 43 % and 63.7 % for 'Granular' and 'Foam' patterns, respectively, whereas the 95 % confidence interval decreases. The segment orientation rose of 'Foam' retails a rhombohedral shape until 400 % stretch, with progressive thinning and elongation of the rhombus. The shape of the GBSI density rose for the 'Foam' pattern initially changes towards rhombic (at \sim 110-200 % stretch), and then rapidly develops an hourglass shape with α close to 90°, whereas the 'Granular' pattern forms the hourglass shape after \sim 250 % stretch.

Figure 2.4: Two case studies of 'simple' initial 2D grain microstructures: 'Granular' and 'Foam', analysed via three different analytical methods. a) and b) Analysis of original trace patterns of each microstructure with long axis orientation rose plots, based on the long axis of the fitted (grain) ellipses from ImageJ analysis data. Grains cut by the frame are excluded from analysis, and (grain boundary) segment orientation plotted as equal area, non-length-weighted roses via GBPaQ. Dataset includes segments of rim grains. GBSI density contour rose diagrams from radial scan line distribution analysis are also

presented, where the average GBSI density is shown as red circle and the orientation dependent GBSI density is marked by a blue contour. c) and d) show the evolution of the patterns with stretching steps. A section of the grain boundary pattern with one grain marked throughout the stretching steps is shown for each selected step.

2.5 Discussion

2.5.1 Comparison of different methods and the impact of length-weighting

The long axis orientation (fitted ellipse), segment orientation, and GBSI density and orientation results of the 'Granular' pattern are perfectly consistent with each other (Fig. 2.4a,c). The 'Foam' pattern results show distinct deviations between the different methods (Fig. 2.4b,d). While the long axis orientation and segment orientation roses are consistent at low stretch, GBSI density α is different by $\sim 100^{\circ}$. Therefore, α is susceptible to subtle variations in the pattern at low strains (weak SPOs).

Length-weighting makes only a slight difference for the initial 'Granular' pattern with regular radial distribution of increasing and decreasing bin lengths, whereas stretching of the 'Granular' and the 'Foam' patterns both show weakening and intensification over several orientation bins (Fig. 2.5a). The non-length-weighted rose is very evenly rhombohedral, whereas the length-weighted rose shows that the maximum azimuth magnitude is surrounded by several similar intensity peaks (plateau) (Fig. 2.5a). The long axis orientation and the circular mean segment orientation (MSO) are based on the complete pattern, whereas the GBSI analysis without smoothing is selective. Single radial scan results are susceptible to pattern inhomogeneity (i.e., stochastic variation), and are consequently sensitive to the positions of the scan lines. The distinct deviation of density contour shape and angle of *α* from GBSI density analysis, compared to results from the other methods (Fig. 2.4b,d) are direct measure of inhomogeneity (stochastic fluctuations) in the grain boundary pattern rather than an 'uncertainty' due to imprecise quantification. The location of α depends on a single minimum value, which may be subject to such stochastic fluctuations in the grain boundary pattern.

The application of a smoothing function could significantly reduce the impact of such stochastic fluctuations. However, contrary to conventional more sophisticated strain analysis methods, any smoothing algorithm needs to honour the complex shape of the GBSI density plots rather than smoothing these complex shapes to perfect ellipses. For example, some smoothing algorithms could easily eradicate GBSI minima and maxima, and therefore features like the rhombohedral GBSI density contour of the 'Foam' pattern would be lost. Therefore, it is necessary to evaluate the degree of necessary smoothing to allow for complex shapes.

Figure 2.5: Segment azimuth and GBSI density for 'Granular' and 'Foam' grain boundary patterns. a) Comparison of length-weighted and not length-weighted segment orientation roses from GBPaQ analysis. b) Diagrams comprise superimposed lengthweighted segment orientation and GBSI density plots. c) GBSI density contour rose diagram of all stretching steps of the 'Granular' pattern and the 'Foam' grain boundary pattern, respectively.

2.5.2 Systematic evolution of *Imin* **with increasing SPO strength**

Values of $\bar{x}N_L(\theta)$, $N_L(\alpha)$ and $N_L(\gamma)$, as well as I_{min} , have been calculated automatically for each stretching step using GBPaQ. The SPO evolution is analysed by plotting *Imin* against *r*. The results of the *Imin* development show that *Imin* first decreases rapidly towards 0 with increasing stretching (Fig. 2.6). Both patterns have *Imin* trends that evolve following a general power law function $(y = x^{-a})$ during stretching.

Figure 2.6: Minimum intercept intensity *Imin* **of the two patterns and stretching steps, plotted versus axial ratio** *r* **of the fitted ellipse in a), and as power law trend lines in loglog space in b).**

The power law relationship of I_{min} and r is consistent with the simple geometrical consideration that the stronger the SPO, the greater the spacing between grain boundary segments in the maximum grain elongation alignment direction. Hence, stretching (strain) results in the rapid decrease of the number of GBSIs in α . This is a power law relationship, visible in the *Imin* versus *r* diagram (Fig. 2.6) and GBSI density contour diagrams (Fig. 2.5c), where the contours at first rapidly (exponentially) close in parallel with the stretching orientation. The grain boundary segments get re-oriented and increase in length successively with increasing stretch. The degree of this rotation during stretching is strongly dependent on the initial orientation and to a slightly lesser degree, on their length. Segments with closer azimuths to the direction of stretch rotate within the first increments of strain and lengthen more rapidly. The segments intercepted along α are selectively shorter and increasingly sorted for angles perpendicular to the orientation from the scan line with increasing SPO strength.

2.5.3 Potential applications of GBSI-based quantification to geological problems

The power law trend relation is also a combination of two method approaches, as it combines fitted ellipse-based *r* and GBSI-based *Imin* concept. The calculation of *Imin* provides a powerful tool for quantifying the SPO strength without being limited by scale or unit, and therefore makes it easy to compare a pattern to any other.

The *Imin* versus *r* diagram with the definition of a reference power law trend makes it possible to plot any *r* or *Imin* and determine a range of the corresponding value. For the establishment of such a reference diagram, further investigations with different strain geometries and patterns with more complex geometry are inevitable. Further, the variance of *Imin* needs to be investigated. Identification and quantification of deformation mechanisms using a GBSI-based method in combination with quantitative grain boundary irregularity via sphericity parameter determination, as introduced by Fan et al*.* (2021) may be of great value.

The big advantage of a GBSI approach is that pattern characteristics like the directional density of grain boundaries, directly using grain boundary segments, as well as grain and grain pattern geometry are analysed directionally. Thus, the GBSI rose plot can be used to study the impact of grain boundaries on directional characteristics like acoustic wave velocity anisotropy. Though it is known that seismic velocity is controlled to a high order by crystallographic preferred orientation (CPO) (e.g., Lloyd et al*.,* 2011a*;* Zhong et al*.,* 2014; Vel et al., 2016), the impact of other petrofabrics like grain boundaries and SPO is not yet fully understood (e.g., Burlini and Kunze, 2000; Valcke et al*.,* 2006; Vargas-Meleza et al*.,* 2015). Three possible main applications that involve GBSI-based quantification analysis via GBPaQ are identified, illustrating different strengths of this approach:

I) More representative pattern quantification combining fitted ellipse, segment geometry, and GBSI methods provides the opportunity of analysing more complex patterns than was possible before.

II) Comparative, quick SPO quantification of different, potentially unrelated patterns by calculating *Imin* values, and with the potential to determine correspondent pattern characteristics using a future, more refined *Imin* versus *r* diagram with reference power law curve(s).

III) Direction-based grain boundary pattern quantification via GBSI density and orientation analysis provides more representative data on directional characteristics. GBPaQ could develop into a useful tool for studying the impact of grain boundary pattern inhomogeneity and anisotropy on rock characteristics like seismic wave attenuation, physical and mechanical behaviour.

2.6 Conclusions

Given established importance of grain boundary networks, it is critical that we quantify them with objective, robust, repeatable and open source methods. Accordingly, it is of major importance to quantify grain boundaries using state of the art automation (with toolboxes like GBPaQ) to support recent analytical developments (e.g., micro-CT).

The minimum intercept intensity power law trend and GBSI density contour rose diagram are promising tools for further SPO and grain boundary pattern geometry quantification. Testing of the GBSI approach on three different grain boundary network patterns has led to the following findings:

- Length-weighting of segment orientation roses represents pattern geometry that may weaken SPO quantification but gives a more representative depiction of the pattern without simplification.
- GBSI roses capture a more representative depiction of directional characteristics \bullet of a grain boundary pattern, yet the orientations of α and y are more likely to have big angular variations compared to non–GBSI-based methods. Higher angular variations in α and γ are anticipated for populations of approximately equant grains.
- Plotting the evolution of I_{min} versus *r* as data points shows a general trend that can be described by a power law.

CHAPTER 3

Grain boundary (shape) evolution of single and dual-phase aggregates during plane-strain deformation – Combining numerical simulations with grain boundary intercept based SPO quantification

Abstract

Application of a grain boundary segment-based shape preferred orientation (SPO) analysis to simulated, evolving microstructures unlocks a new understanding of SPO pattern development during progressive shear and in single and multi-phase rocks. Viscoplastic numerical simulations were used to generate grain boundary patterns with pre-defined characteristics deformed under different conditions. Variables in initial models included single- and two-phase materials with two grain sizes. Numerical deformation simulations that incorporate dislocation glide were run with end-member simple shear and pure shear strain geometries, resulting in significant grain elongation and rotation. SPO is stronger in single-phase models, independent from strain geometry, and visible in grain boundary segment azimuth and grain boundary segment intercept (GBSI) density analysis. Grain boundary segment azimuth roses show different mean orientation evolution depending on strain geometry. GBSI densitybased minimum intensity (*Imin*) shows that pure shear models have slightly stronger SPO. The contour plots of GBSI density evolution have strain geometry specific shapes. The applied GBSI method was capable to quantify different deformation mechanisms and parameters. Future work might focus on further deformation mechanisms like dislocation climb, grain boundary migration, grain boundary sliding, and application to natural rocks.

3.1 Introduction

It has long been established how the orientations of macroscopic "bulk" lineations evolve during progressive deformation in shear zones (e.g., Simpson and De Paor, 1993*;* Fossen and Cavalcante, 2017), but details of the evolution of grain shapes in polycrystalline aggregates at the microstructural scale have received comparatively less attention. A shape preferred orientation (SPO) is defined as a measure of the

alignment of non-equidimensional grains in a rock or crystalline material and is a fundamental descriptor of material microstructures and petrofabrics (Panozzo, 1984; Passchier and Trouw, 2005; Launeau et al., 2010). Furthermore, the effects of second phases are not generally considered for the development of lineations or SPOs in established models of shear zones, even though most natural rocks are comprised of more than one mineral phase that controls their microstructures and rheology (e.g., Jessell et al*.*, 2009; Llorens et al*.*, 2019).

Previous studies of SPO quantification have focussed on the analysis of long axes of grains, whereas the evolution of grain boundary patterns, which are key for the characterisation of the rock microstructure, has been given little attention. Understanding how grain boundary patterns evolve is important because grain interfaces can host and transmit fluids (e.g., Rutter, 1976; Isrealachvili, 1992; 2011; Hickman and Evans, 1995), be preferred sites where diagenetic and metamorphic reactions occur (e.g., Urai et al., 1986a,b Wheeler, 2018), exert a first-order control on the material strength, and attenuate tele seismic waves (e.g., Kern and Wenk, 1985; Valcke et al*.,* 2006; Vargas-Meleza et al*.,* 2015). Therefore, the significance of developing an understanding of the behaviour of grain boundary patterns during progressive deformation of polycrystalline materials broadly applies across metamorphic petrology, tectonics, structural geology, geophysics, mineral and rock physics, and material science.

Microstructures are a coupling link between material properties, boundary conditions and processes that together control the behaviour and evolution of a rock (Piazolo et al*.*, 2019). They describe the state a rock achieves as a result of the interplay between various processes and boundary conditions. A microstructure might be preserved for millions or billions of years, whereas temperature or elastic strain is ephemeral (Piazolo et al*.*, 2019). Therefore, microstructures are one of the prime forensic tools that can be used to unravel the history of a rock, allowing us to deduce the succession of strain rates, stresses, diagenetic and metamorphic conditions as well as rock rheology before, during and after deformation (e.g., Passchier and Trouw, 2005). However, a microstructure plays an active and central role in the evolution of a rock (Gottstein, 2004). Consequently, rigorous analyses and correct interpretations of rock microstructures is crucial in understanding rock deformation and rheology (Piazolo et al*.*, 2019).

The grain boundary pattern has long been used as a tool for strain analysis (Flinn, 1962; Ramsay, 1976; Fry, 1979; Fossen, 2016). The most common way of SPO quantification in 2D polished sections is by using fitted ellipses to roughly elliptic shaped grains and particles (Flinn, 1962; Dunnet, 1969; Elliott, 1970; Ramsay, 1976). Grains (or objects such as ooids, pebbles, lapilli) are typically approximated as fitted ellipses or ellipsoids, and an SPO can be defined by the orientation distribution and axial ratios of their longest and shortest principal axes. For homogeneous strains in 3D, a dataset of multiple grains/objects can then be fitted with a finite strain ellipsoid, which has three mutually orthogonal planes of symmetry that represent the relative orientation and stretch of the principal strain axes (Fossen, 2016).

Another method for 2D strain determination from SPOs in deformed rocks is the regular SURFOR (SURFace ORientation) and inverse SURFOR wheel analysis, developed by Panozzo (1983; 1984; 1987). The inverse SURFOR wheel is based on the concept of change of probability of interception of grain boundaries on a given traverse as a function of its orientation. A set of parallel scan lines that are rotated counter clockwise towards 18 different orientations in 10° steps are used to collect the data. The intercept density is then plotted as a strain ellipse, or as a sinusoidal curve, against the orientation of the scan line. Other parameters like the distance between intercepts (Panozzo, 1987; Launeau et al*.*, 2010) or the tie lines between centre points of neighbouring grains (Ramsay, 1976; Mulchrone, 2003) are also quantified. Grain boundary intercept-based methods have the advantage that they are based on the grain boundary pattern geometry and, thus, provide more information than the fitted ellipse approach that merely summarizes the grain boundaries. Automated intercept-based versions rely on image processing (Launeau et al*.*, 1990; Heilbronner, 2000; Herwegh, 2000) for quick and systematic identification of grain boundaries.

A more detailed analysis of the grain boundary pattern characteristics can be generated from the combination of the well-established and widely-used approach of using segments for fracture analysis (vectors describing a fracture) by using the MATLABTM toolbox FracPaQ (Healy et al*.*, 2017), with an adjusted version of the grain boundary intercept method.. Tracing microstructural elements manually is a time intensive but common technique, primarily used for microstructure analysis with freely available raster graphics software (e.g., ImageJ; Schneider et al*.*, 2012) and also the basis for the fitted ellipse-based strain analysis. The here introduced minimum intensity (*Imin*) (chapter 2) is a quantifiable parameter, useful to determine the strength of weak SPOs, and complements other approaches, such as fitted ellipse axial ratios.

Our understanding of the evolution of SPO during progressive deformation is mostly limited to simplification of the geometry of the finite strain ellipse in simple and pure shear. However, no studies have documented the evolution of grain boundary patterns in detail yet.

Furthermore, the grain boundary pattern evolution in two-phase systems has not yet been quantitatively investigated. Numerical models of two-phase systems, where there are minerals, objects, or layers with different mechanical behaviours, are generally used to study the evolution of polymineralic aggregates, rigid object rotation, or folding, among others (e.g., Jessell et al., 2009; Griera et al., 2013; Ran et al., 2018).

For example, the interaction of rigid or soft inclusions relative to a matrix can be used to simulate ductile deformation of conglomerates and to predict in what situations porphyroclasts and porphyroblasts rotate (Jessell et al*.*, 2009; Griera et al*.*, 2013; Ran et al*.*, 2018). Clusters of phases are known to change the deformation dynamics such that the deformation of one phase is impeded due to the presence of another phase, and formation of clusters of high viscosity particles cause disturbances of the matrix flow (Ildefonse et al*.*, 1992a,b; Samanta and Bhattacharyya, 2003; Marques et al*.*, 2014). Closely spaced particles are known to form clusters or trains that mechanically act as single particles (Blumenfeld and Bouchez, 1988; Tikoff and Teyssier, 1994; Jessell et al*.*, 2009).

This study presents a workflow for the characterization of grain boundary patterns (ELLE maps and GBPaQ analytical results), for fine- and coarse grained single- and two-phase materials during progressive pure- and simple shear. The evolution of a) the bulk GBSI density by azimuth, b), the minimum and maximum GBSI intercept density orientations (α and γ), c) the grain boundary segment orientations intercepted by the minimum and maximum GBSI density scan lines, and d) the minimum grain boundary intercept intensity (*Imin*) is quantified.

3.2 Methods

Using numerically simulated microstructures are advantageous for testing methods for SPO quantification because they offer the opportunity to (a) control initial parameters (e.g., number of phases, their rheological properties, strain geometry, phase distribution, and grain size and shape distributions), and (b) investigate the evolution of microstructures with progressive strain. Therefore, a series of simulations with the open-source VPFFT-ELLE approach (http://elle.ws) were run for this study. This couples the viscoplastic Fast Fourier Transform (VPFFT) code (Lebensohn, 2001; Lebensohn et al., 2008; Griera et al*.*, 2013; Llorens et al*.*, 2016; Ran et al*.*, 2018) with ELLE modules.

Eight ELLE model configurations simulated the deformation of 2D single- and twophase microstructures of initial homogeneous foam texture patterns, with two different initial grain sizes, and in progressive pure shear and simple shear plane-strain endmember boundary conditions. Models were run up to a natural strain of 2 in 100 time steps, with natural strain increments of 0.2. The grain boundary patterns were analysed via automated grain boundary segment orientation analysis (FracPaQ, Healy et al*.*, 2017) and the newly-developed automated grain boundary segment intercept (GBSI) based methods (GBPaQ, chapter 2).

3.2.1 Numerical modelling with VPFFT-ELLE

The initial microstructure in ELLE consists of straight segments connecting boundary nodes (*bnodes*). These segments form polygons (also termed *flynns* or grains). There are two types of boundary nodes: double nodes, which have two neighbour nodes and belong to two polygons, and triple nodes, which have three neighbour nodes and belong to three polygons. This analysis process considers that each segment between two consecutive *bnodes* is an individual grain boundary segment. VPFFT uses a regular mesh of nodes, termed unconnected nodes or *undoes*, which are not related to the boundary nodes, and that store properties such as crystal lattice orientation and dislocation density.

The model boundaries are periodic both in *X* and *Y*, so if a grain is cut by the model boundary, the other half of the same grain can be found on the opposite side of the model (e.g., Jessell et al*.*, 2009). The four boundaries of the ELLE bounding are periodic, and thus the pattern can be multiplied due to this periodicity, forming an infinite mosaic. For simple shear simulations, a routine repositions all the nodes and segments into a 1x1 bounding box, to allow visualisation of the microstructure up to high strains. The boundary conditions in simple shear were applied along randomly positioned horizontal lines at every incremental time step to spread their effect through the whole model. For pure shear simulations, the pattern was multiplied once in Y, meaning that the pure shear pattern is composed of two sets of the exact same pattern used for simple shear.

The software platform ELLE was coupled with the VPFFT code, thus allowing the full-field simulation of various systems with different mineralogy, deformation mechanisms, etc. Lebensohn (2001), Lebensohn et al*.* (2008; 2009) Griera et al*.* (2011; 2013) and Llorens et al*.* (2016).

Dislocation glide was used as the only deformation mechanism for the numerical simulations in this study. The results are therefore relevant to rocks or materials that have been deformed in the dislocation glide-dominated creep regime. Dislocation glide, along with dislocation climb, is an essential part of dislocation creep. Dislocation glide is known as the dominant deformation mechanism throughout metamorphic zones affecting minerals and aggregates at low- and medium-grade metamorphism. Understanding deformation glide, how it operates, and the resulting flow laws are key to ultimately understanding the rheology of rocks under metamorphic conditions. In the case of natural salt deposits, which are of major impact for basin rheology, dislocation creep processes, as well as solution-precipitation creep and water-assisted dynamic recrystallisation, are all of major importance (Urai et al*.*, 1987; Schléder and Urai, 2005; Urai et al*.*, 2008).

Dislocation glide was simulated in a way that each point is a crystallite with a certain lattice orientation. Crystal symmetry and the available slip systems were defined, together with the ratios of critically resolved shear stress (CRSS) required to activate glide of dislocations for each slip system concerning the softer system. In this way, deformation was accommodated according to the lattice orientation and available slip systems. The models used in this study were limited to deformation via dislocation glide in a way that dislocation climb and recrystallisation processes were not simulated. A hexagonal base symmetry was used with three slip systems: basal, pyramidal, and prismatic, similar to Griera et al*.* (2011; 2013), Ran et al*.* (2018; 2019), and Llorens et al*.* (2019). The models are limited to single- and two-phase simulations. In the single-phase models all grains had the same effective viscosity, in which the CRSS ratio for all slip systems is 1. Two-phase simulations included grains of two isotropic phases, meaning the CRSS ratios for the slip systems of each phase were the same, but in which the CRSS needed to activate dislocation glide for the hard phase (high viscosity phase) was five times higher than that required to activate the soft one (low viscosity phase). The two-phase models initially had 50 % of the grains of each phase (hard and soft).

Several statistical grain boundary pattern characteristics were exported from ELLE per time step (Appendix B; Fig. B.1, and B.3; digital Appendix B). They included the minimum and maximum angles from a reference orientation. The maximum and minimum angles were measured from segments defined by consecutive boundary nodes. The number of grains in the models changed slightly across time steps due to topological modifications that were conducted every time step to be able to reach high strain. There was a minimum and maximum boundary node separation. If the distance between two neighbour grain boundary nodes was too high a new node is added. If the distance got too small, a node was removed. Moreover, when two triple nodes got too close, switches were applied to maintain a grain pattern that could be deformed in the next time step.

There were also situations in which a grain is split into two or two grains are merged. Moreover, a minimum number of crystallites (unconnected nodes) was needed within each grain and ELLE automatically does topology changes to maintain this. Accordingly, this parameter was not meaningful in the models presented here. However, it is useful when there are recrystallisation processes active (e.g., subgrain rotation, grain boundary migration, new grain nucleation), which can increase or reduce the number of grains due to physical processes and not because of topology checks. The relationship between crystallographic preferred orientation and grain boundaries was deliberately excluded, as the scope of the study is limited to quantification of the shape of microstructures. Other exportable parameters related to the grain boundary length, grain boundary elongation, angles were valuable for SPO quantification.

3.2.2 Case studies

All models were based on two different initial foam textures (Fig. 3.1a,b; Fig. 3.3a; Table. 3.1), generated to simulate equant grains with randomly oriented (no/weak SPO) grain boundary patterns and small variance in grain size. The coarse-grained model, which initially had 250 grains, and a grain boundary pattern built by 3,475 linear grain boundary segments, of which 1,615 were phase boundary segments. The fine-grained model, which initially had 2,626 grains, contained a grain boundary pattern consisting of 26,805 linear grain boundary segments, with 12,730 of them being phase boundary segments.

Figure 3.1: Maps and plots of initial (time step = 0) microstructural models used for deformation simulations and quantification of the evolution of SPO. a) The four time

step 0 maps for coarse grained simple shear and pure shear, single-phase and two-phase deformation models. b) The four fine grained time step 0 maps equivalent to a). White grains have lower viscosity; grey grains have five times higher critical resolved shear stress. For pure shear, the basic pattern used for simple shear is vertically repeated. c) Bulk grain boundary segment azimuth rose plot of coarse-grained basic grain boundary patterns, representative for all four models based on the grain boundary pattern. Azimuth is plotted against the frequency (%) in equal area, not length-weighted rose diagrams. d) Bulk grain boundary segment azimuth rose plot representative for all initial fine grained basic grain boundary patterns. e) GBSI density rose plot for coarse grained basic grain boundary patterns. Results from GBPaQ GBSI density analysis, using one central radial scan line centre with 0.5° angles between scan lines. The GBSI density (per pixel) is plotted against scan line orientation as blue contours. The average grain boundary intercept density $(\bar{x}N_L(\theta))$ **from all scan lines is plotted as red circles. f) GBSI density rose plot of the fine-grained basic grain boundary patterns. e) and f) each contain two blue lines and two red circles that reveal a difference based on simple shear and pure shear maps. This is due to the different placement of the rotation centre in the double pattern pure shear maps.**

Table 3.1: GBPaQ results at initial time step 0 ($\varepsilon_n = 0$ **) and final time step 100 (** $\varepsilon_n = 2$ **). %** $=$ relative to initial value; $1v =$ single-phase model, $2v =$ two-phase model; *final step 66 $(\varepsilon_n = 1.32)$. Rest of parameter symbols explained in Table 3.2.

		Coarse-grained			Fine-grained					
			Simple shear		Pure shear		Simple shear		Pure shear	
Parameter	ε_n	1v	2v	1v	2v	1v	2v	1v	2v	
\boldsymbol{S}	$\mathbf{0}$	3,475	3,475	6,969	6,969	25,805	25,805	51,670	51,670	
	$\overline{2}$	8,580	7,321	15,772	16,230	55,812	46,213	98,358	87,720	
	2 [%]	247	211	226	233	216	179	190	170	
$\overline{x}N_L(\theta)$ [ppx]	$\mathbf{0}$	18.2	18.2	17.5	17.5	58.9	58.9	59.7	59.7	
	$\overline{2}$	45.7	36.2	38.7*	40.0	134.3	107.3	120.2	109.8	
	2 [%]	251	199	221	229	229	182	201	184	
α [°]	$\mathbf{0}$	$\overline{2}$	\overline{c}	32	32	19.5	19.5	8.5	8.5	
	2	14	16	$0*$	$\mathbf{0}$	15	17	$\overline{2}$	τ	
$N_L(a)$ [ppx]	θ	14.8	14.8	13.7	13.7	50.5	50.5	50.5	50.5	
	$\overline{2}$	6.3	14.7	$4.0*$	11.9	14.7	33.7	11.9	23.8	
Y	θ	14	14	52	52	331.5	331.5	307.5	307.5	
	$\overline{2}$	332	346	$14*$	18	339	355.5	359.5	3	
$N_L(y)$ [ppx]	$\overline{0}$	23.2	23.2	21.1	21.1	71.6	71.6	68.4	68.4	
	$\overline{2}$	74.7	60.0	$65.9*$	59.5	223.2	170.5	214.3	190.5	
I_{min}	θ	0.80	0.80	0.78	0.78	0.86	0.86	0.85	0.85	
	$\overline{2}$	0.12	0.35	$0.10*$	0.19	0.11	0.31	0.10	0.22	

The comparison of these two initial models allows evaluating the influence of grain size. The coarse- and fine-grained basic grain boundary patterns were used for running four different models each (Fig. 3.1a, b): i – single-phase in simple shear, ii – singlephase in pure shear, iii - two-phase in simple shear, and iv - two-phase in pure shear. For the models with two-phase grains, approximately 50 % of grains of the pattern were randomly assigned to one of the two viscosities, resulting in a statistically homogeneous distribution of phases. Square 2D models were used for simple shear simulations. For pure shear, they were duplicated to form a 1:2 length to height ratio. The grain boundary patterns were generated to seamlessly fit together, and the set of grain boundary segments was duplicated. Limitation of the models to phase boundary segments reduced the number of segments analysed by more than half. The phase boundary distribution followed the foam pattern and randomly created clusters that included one to several grains of the same viscosity (Fig. 3.2a,b).

Figure 3.2: Maps and plots of initial (time step = 0) phase boundary models. a) Two time step 0 maps for coarse grained simple shear and pure shear two-phase deformation models. b) Two fine grained time step 0 maps equivalent to a). c) And d) show bulk phase boundary segment azimuth rose plots of coarse grained and fine-grained initial grain boundary patterns. Azimuth is plotted against the frequency (%) in equal area, not length-weighted rose diagrams. See Appendix B, Fig. B.2 for GBSI density rose plots for

all four initial two-phase models. For details on the grain boundary segment azimuth analysis see Fig. 3.2.

3.2.3 Grain boundary segment intercepts and based minimum intensity The grain boundary segment intercept (GBSI) density method is described and discussed in detail in chapter 2. Intercept-based methods that utilize scan lines are long established in stereology and geoscience (Saltykov, 1958; Underwood, 1970; Daniel et al*.*, 1988). The most utilized versions of intercept-based pattern quantification, including automation, are those of regular SURFOR (Panozzo, 1984) and inverse SURFOR (Panozzo, 1987) methods, and the intercept method version developed by Launeau and Robin (1996), and Launeau et al*.* (2010). Strain analysis by intercept density is based on the change of orientation of surfaces (i.e., grain boundaries) as a function of strain (Panozzo, 1984).

The main difference is that the GBSI density is calculated for patterns undergoing deformation for this study with the focus on SPO, and not primarily to determine the strain ellipsoid of a specific sample. The method is more dependable in determining the strength of a PO, than in determining its orientation for patterns deformed at low strain (chapter 2). Further, the advantages and disadvantages of minimum intensity (*Imin*) as a tool have not yet been sufficiently studied. The minimum and maximum grain boundary segment density orientations (*α* and *ɣ*) have been shown to differ slightly from the short axis and long axis of the finite strain ellipse (Chapter 2). The GBSI density analysis conducted by GBPaQ is based on radial scan lines emanating from the pattern centre and, therefore, analyses grain boundary segments of part of the pattern and not the whole pattern.

The GBSI density method was applied as follows: GBSI density was calculated along a single set of equal length radial scan lines placed in the centre of the sample patterns, using the MATLABTM toolbox GBPaO (chapter 2). Scan line length was determined by the smallest dimension of the pattern (length or height). The angle between scan lines (*dβ*) was set to 0.5°. The density was calculated as a total measure. A 0.5°-degree distance between scan lines means that the same segment will be counted multiple times by neighbouring scan lines and was chosen because the objective is to find the minimum grain boundary intercept density $(N_L(\alpha))$, rather than the strain ellipsoid through intercepts.

Minimum intensity I_{min} is introduced in chapter 2. It provides a tool that combines preferred grain orientation variation and elongation. Minimum intensity (*Imin*) relates the minimum GBSI density $(N_L(\alpha))$ to the average GBSI density $(\bar{x}N_L(\theta))$.

$$
I_{\min} = \frac{N_L(\alpha)}{\bar{x}N_L(\theta)} \tag{1}
$$

Alternatively to using densities, it can also be calculated using the minimum number of GBSIs $(N(\alpha))$ divided by the average number of GBSIs intercepted per scan line $(\bar{x}N)$, under the condition that the scan line length is constant and the number of scan lines in each orientation is considered.

$$
I_{\min} = \frac{N(\alpha)}{\bar{x}N} \tag{2}
$$

Minimum intensity is dimensionless and ranges between 0 and 1. SPO weakens towards 1 and increases in strength towards 0. It is a method to calculate a dimensionless strength of SPO for different patterns.

Symbol	Description
S	Number of grain boundary segments
\boldsymbol{N}	Number of grain boundary segment intercepts
θ	Scan line angle (between 0 to 180° , anticlockwise from x)
$d\beta$	Angular intervals between scan lines
α	Orientation of (scan line with) minimum intercept density $\lceil \circ \rceil$
Y	Orientation of (scan line with) maximum intercept density [°]
φ	Angle between minimum and maximum intercept density orientations (scan lines) $\lceil \circ \rceil$
$N(\alpha)$	Minimum number of intercepts
N(y)	Maximum number of intercepts
$\bar{x}N$	Average number of intercepts
$\bar{x}N_L(\theta)$	Average orientation dependent segment intercept density
$N_L(\alpha)$	Minimum segment intercept density
$N_L(Y)$	Maximum segment intercept density
I(min)	Minimum intensity

Table 3.2: List of symbols used in relation to GBSI-based quantification

3.3 Results

3.3.1 Initial grain boundary pattern characteristics

Pattern analysis was conducted using ELLE statistical monitoring data during the deformation for each time step (0-100) and GBPaQ data on the grain boundary segments and GBSI analysis (Fig. 3.1; Table 3.1). The GBSI density rose diagrams (Fig. 3.1e,f) show a slight variation in the GBSI density outline and $\bar{x}N_L(\theta)$ (red circles) between simple shear and pure shear maps, which is most visible in the data from coarse grained models.

Conversely, α is significantly different between strain models, with a \sim 30° angle (2.5° to 32.4°) between simple and pure shear grain boundary maps for the 250/500 grain pattern and $\sim 11^{\circ}$ (8.6° to 19.4°) for the 2.626/5.252 grain boundary map (Fig. 3.1e.f, blue arrows). Both grain boundary segment azimuth plots (Fig. 3.1c,d) and GBSI density rose plots (Fig. 3.1e,f) of initial patterns show the absence of a SPO and are effective visualizations of the randomly oriented and distributed grain boundary segments, respectively.

Consistent grain boundary intercept magnitudes with orientation results in an almost isotropic GBSI density of initial patterns. Furthermore, *Imin* for initial patterns was high, ranging between 0.86 and 0.78 (Table 3.1). The outlines of segment azimuth roses of the fine-grained grain boundary pattern (Fig. 1d) is smoother than for the coarse-grained models. The slightly hexagonal shape of segment azimuth roses is explained by foam textures tending to the energetically most ideal state, which is achieved by grain boundary curvature and length reduction, and triple junctions stabilising at 120º.

The phase boundary segment azimuth plot of the initial pattern of the two-phase coarse-grained models (Fig. 3.2c) differs slightly from the grain boundary segment azimuth plot (Fig. 3.1c), with more variation in magnitude between neighbouring orientation. The absence of a SPO is still indicated. The corresponding grain boundary segment and phase boundary segment azimuth plots of the fine-grained models are almost identical (Fig. 3.1d, and 3.2c), despite a significant reduction of segments analysed.

3.3.2 Grain boundary pattern evolution

Single-phase models (both pure, and simple shear) show the development of a pattern that can be described as a single foliation, which intensifies with increasing strain (Fig. 3.3, left side). The two-phase models (both pure, and simple shear) initial formation of an anastomosing pattern, which develops into systematic S-C or shear band fabric with increasing strain (Fig. 3.3, right side). Low viscosity grains tend to align to form shear bands.

Figure 3.3: Development of the four coarse grain size models represented by the pattern maps and equal area, length-weighted grain boundary segment azimuth rose plots at natural strains (*εn***) of 0.6, 1.2 and 1.8 (time steps 30, 60 and 90) for a) simple shear and b) pure shear. The maps shown for b) pure shear are square sub-areas, enlarged from the centre of each simulation.** *S* **is the number of segments analysed. Four grains are marked by assorted colours in a) to track the effect of strain geometry and viscosity variance over simulated strain. Grain 1 in the simple shear two-phase model has five times the viscosity of grains two, three and four in the same model. A different grain is marked in b) pure shear, two-phase model to track the evolution of a high viscosity grain. Due to the pure shear strain geometry, the shape of the used grain boundary map (originally 1:2) significantly increases in length, as the map height decreases. The pure strain maps have been magnified accordingly, showing only a square section of the very centre of the elongating map.**

The two-phase, simple shear model (Fig. 3.3a, right side) shows that the higher viscosity grains (in grey) develop weaker elongation compared to the lower viscosity grains (in white) and to the grains of the single-phase model (Fig. 3.3, left side). The low viscosity grains become strongly elongated and form shawls (sigmoidal clusters) throughout the pattern (Fig. 3.3).

3.3.2.1 Tracking of viscosity dependent grain evolution

Comparison of grain shape evolution shows how fundamentally different the microstructures develop between the single- and two-phase scenarios. This is illustrated by tracking several grains in the coarse grain boundary pattern (labelled 1 to 5 in Fig. 3.3; Appendix B, Fig. B.4). In the simple shear single-phase model, all grains show similar shape and orientation evolution that is somewhat representative of the SPO defined by the entire microstructure, forming a foliation (Fig. 3.3a, left side). The two-phase models show the formation of sigmoidal grains as part of developing shear bands (Fig. 3.3a, right side). Each tracked grain of the two-phase models displays a fundamentally different strain behaviour.

Grain 1 shows how a grain with high viscosity, surrounded by low viscosity grains rotated synchronously to the surrounding low viscosity grains, but did not undergo significant elongation (Fig. 3.3a, right side).

A low viscosity grain (Grain 2) surrounded an equally proportion of low and high viscosity grains (Fig. 3.3a, right side) elongated quickly as part of a cluster built by the surrounding low viscosity grains and deformed more compared to its equivalent in the single-phase model (Fig. 3.3a, left side). It also takes on a sigmoidal shape, the same as the cluster that is strongly elongated in the *x* direction (Fig. 3.3a, right side).

Grain 3 is a low viscosity grain surrounded mostly by other low viscosity grains that became less sigmoidal compared to Grain 2 and very elongated parallel to *x* (Fig. 3.3a, right side). In between time step 36 and 45 (natural strain of 0.72 and 0.90), this grain is situated between two high viscosity grains, which causes it to neck and separate into two grains.

A solitary low viscosity grain (Grain 4) surrounded by high viscosity grains evolves in a similar way to its single-phase counterpart, both in rotation and elongation magnitudes (Fig. 3.3a, right side). Grain 5, only marked in the pure shear two-phase map (Fig. 3.3b, right side), is a case study for a high viscosity grain initially surrounded by both, low and high viscosity grains. Rotation towards 0° (*x*) is reached within the first few increments of deformation.

It is evident from the maps in Figure 3.3b that the elongation of the low viscosity grains in the pure shear two-phase models (Fig. 3.3b, right side) is much weaker compared to the grains in the pure shear single-viscosity models (Fig. 3.3b, left side). High viscosity grains and clusters in the pure shear two-phase models are strongly elongated and sigmoidal (Fig. 3.3b, right side).

3.3.2.2 Evolution of grain boundary segment azimuths

Both grain-scale observations and grain boundary segment azimuth rose plots show increasing elongation and strengthening of SPO with increasing natural strain (Fig. 3.3). Trends in all results for coarse- and fine-grained models are similar, with the main difference being that coarse grained models tend to yield results with more 'statistical noise' due to fewer grains analysed. The maps and corresponding segment angle orientation rose plots (Fig. 3.3) show increasing strengthening of the segment azimuth based SPO with increasing natural strain. The rotation of the segment azimuth based SPO is also visible in the maps (Fig. 33).

Successive increase in magnitude and rotation of the grain boundary segment peaks towards 0° (*x*-axis) are a result of the strengthening of SPO, as is the successive reduction in the number of segments normal to this orientation. The grain boundary segments parallel to grain elongation are significantly reduced during the first time
steps in the single-phase model, whereas the shapes of the segment azimuth rose diagrams of the two-phase model develops from an ellipse to an hourglass shape to a slightly asymmetric hourglass shape, with successive reduction in magnitude. Another difference between single and two-phase models is the increase of maximum intercept magnitudes. For single-phase models the absolute magnitudes of intercept density increase from $> 10\%$ to $> 30\%$ from natural strain of 0.6 to 1.8 (Fig. 3.3a, left side). There is only a slight increase around 5 % visible for the two-phase model from natural strain of 0.6 to 1.8 (Fig. 3.3a, right side).

The pure shear simulations (Fig. 3.3b) show a rapid re-orientation of the SPO, with all maps and segment azimuth rose plots developing a strong preferred orientation at $0/180^\circ$ from *x*. A rapid increase in the strength of the SPO (increase in magnitude of maxima and narrowing in segment azimuths present) is visible for single-phase and two-phase alike. Compared to the simple shear models, SPO strength of the singlephase pure shear model increases slower, whereas the strength of the SPO of the twophase pure shear model increases at a higher rate.

The elongation of low viscosity grains in all two-phase simulations increases at a higher rate than that of high viscosity grains. For example, at a natural strain of 1.34 quantification of the axial ratios of the two grain populations of the coarse grained two-phase simple shear model shows that \sim 75 % of the high viscosity grains fall into the range of axial ratios of 2 to 4, whereas the low viscosity grain fraction covers a much broader range of axial ratios, from 2 to 25, with the maximum bin including \sim 15 % of all low viscosity grains (Fig. 3.4b).

At the beginning of the simulation (time step 0), high and low viscosity grains alike have a relative axial ratio of 1 (Fig. 3.1a,b; Appendix B, Fig. B.3A, ELLE statistics). The grain boundary segment azimuth roses for low and high viscosity grain populations in the coarse grained two-phase simple shear model (Fig. 3.4c) show that there are only minor differences between mean grain boundary segment orientations and maximum bin magnitude of the two grain populations. The shape of the segment azimuth rose of high viscosity grain boundaries shows slightly less pronounced minima and several bins ranging around the maximum with close magnitudes.

Figure 3.4: Phase specific SPO analysis of coarse grained two-phase simple shear at time step 67. a) Grain boundary pattern with *α* **and** *ɣ* **scan line position marked. b) Axial ratios of the long through the short axis of the fitted grain ellipse (ImageJ analysis) as relative fractions for high and low viscosity grain populations and average (mean) values. c) Grain boundary segment orientation rose plots for grain boundary segments of low and high viscosity grains, all grain boundaries in the pattern (bulk viscosity), and phase boundaries. The bulk viscosity and phase boundary segment orientation rose is based on an original ELLE-VPFFT files, but low and high viscosity grains were remapped manually, resulting in a small divergence of mean segment azimuths. Azimuth is plotted against the frequency (%) in the equal area and length-weighted rose diagrams.**

3.3.2.3 Evolution of phase boundary segment azimuths

Results from phase boundary segment azimuth analysis of all four two-phase models show the same trends of cluster and shear band formation as the grain boundary pattern maps (Fig. 3.3a, right side, 3.5c; Appendix B, Fig. B.6c). Rotation of phase boundary segments has been predominantly controlled by simple and pure shear strain geometry of phase boundary segments, similar to that observed for grain boundary segments during plane-strain deformation (Fig. 3.3, 3.5; Appendix B, Fig.B.6).

Figure 3.5: Evolution of phase boundary segment azimuths of fine grained two-phase simple shear and pure shear models. a) Equal area, length-weighted phase boundary segment azimuth rose plots at natural strains (ε_n) of 0.6, 1.2 and 1.8 (time steps 30, 60 **and 90).** *S* **is the number of segments analysed. b) Contoured rose plots of phase boundary segment intercept density per pixel plotted against scan line orientation (***θ***) for the same natural strains in a). Analysis was done using a single rotation centre with 0.5° angles between scan lines, placed in the centre of the analysed map. The location of minimum GBSI density scan line is marked as α. c) Phase boundary pattern of the simple shear fine grained two-phase model at a natural strain of 1.8.**

After rapid re-orientation and evolving formation of phase clusters, the pure shear simulations develop a strong preferred orientation or phase boundaries at 0/180° from x , as the simple shear simulations successively re-oriented towards $0/180^\circ$ from x . Successive increase in magnitude and rotation of the phase boundary segment azimuth

peaks, and successive reduction in magnitude (Fig. 3.5a; Appendix B, Fig. B.6a) have been generally slower and SPO was weaker compared to any of the corresponding grain boundary segment azimuth peaks of single-phase and two-phase models (Fig. 3.3).

3.3.3 Segment intercept density evolution

Contoured rose plots of the GBSI density evolution (Fig. 3.6) are showing distinct differences between the deformation modes simple shear and pure shear. The differences between single- and two-phase, and the impact of grain size on GBSI density were apparent throughout progressive deformation. All eight contoured GBSI density plots (Fig. 3.6a to h) display the evolution from a circular shape towards an hourglass shape. In general, the single-phase models develop a more pronounced minimum ('neck') in the *x*-axis orientation (0/180°). Simple shear (Fig. 3.6a to d) results in rounded hourglass shapes that are oriented diagonally, with *α* rotating towards 0/180° and broader ɣ distribution around 70/110°. The contoured GBSI density analysis for the pure shear models results in hourglass shapes, that successively form smaller *ɣ* distributions ('tips') with increasing natural strain. This is especially pronounced in the fine grained, single-phase model (Fig. 3.6g).

The general difference between the coarse grained and the fine-grained models is that the GBSI density contours are smoother (Fig. 3.6). The number of grain boundaries intercepted along α in the coarse grained, single-phase, pure shear model (Fig. 3.6e) dropped to zero at time step 67, and thus no further intercept data was available after a natural strain of 1.32 was reached. This was not the case for the two-phase models. The difference in viscosity between the phases resulted in the development of a pattern with a generally lower GBSI density, with less pronounced successive increases in maximum density per strain increment, regardless of orientation, for both simple shear and pure shear models. There is no distinct difference in the 'shape' of the GBSI density plots between simple shear of single-phase and two-phase models.

Pure shear deformation models (Fig. 3.6e to h) show very pronounced differences between viscosity, and grain size variation. The hourglass 'tips' are very pronounced and strongly perpendicular from α for the fine grained, single-phase GBSI density contours (Fig. 3.6g), but the coarse grained, single-phase contours (Fig. 3.6e) develop a shape with a number of local maxima.

Figure 3.6: Contoured rose plots of grain boundary segment intercept (GBSI) density per pixel plotted against scan line orientation (*θ***) for all eight simulations. Each plot** shows the initial distribution (time step = 0) in red and final natural strain ε_n of 2 in black. **Analysis was done using a single rotation centre with 0.5° angles between scan lines,**

The two-phase model data stacks both show a double 'fan' shape, with strong maxima. This means that the SPO is defined by a range of orientations, but weaker compared to single-phase models. The 'fan' for the coarse-grained model (Fig. 3.6f) is distributed over a wider orientation range with an asymmetry (i.e., the 'fan' is more open towards 30°), whereas this feature is less distinct in the fine-grained model contours (Fig. 3.6h). The fine grained GBSI density contours of the pure shear model form an intermediate hourglass shape between with 'tips' and 'fans'. In general, GBSI density contours tend to increase (get denser) towards *α* with higher degrees of natural strain.

The phase boundary segment intercept density contours (Fig. 3.5b; Appendix B, Fig. B.6b) shows the same trends as the corresponding GBSI density contoured rose plots (Fig. 3.6, two-phase models), but are significantly less smooth.

3.3.4 Evolution of minimum and maximum segment intercept densities

The evolution of α , *y*, $N_L(\alpha)$ and $N_L(y)$ for all eight grain boundary segment models shows that $N_L(y)$ increases in intensity over a relative wide range of orientations, whereas *NL(α)* decreases with smaller orientation range (Fig. 3.7). *ɣ* of the fine-grained models (Fig. 3.7c,d and g,h) has stronger intensities and less angular variation throughout simulated deformation compared to the coarse-grained models. For example, in case of the coarse grained, simple shear, single-phase model (Fig. 3.7a), the *y* azimuth progresses from \sim 70° to \sim 140° and back to \sim 90° to finish at \sim 120° at the termination of the model. The total angular range is \sim 70°. The evolution of *y* of the fine grained, simple shear, single-phase model (Fig. 3.7c) shows less angular variation, with a total angular range of $\sim 20^{\circ}$. In the case of the pure shear, singlephase, fine-grained model (Fig. 3.7g), *ɣ* shows a strong trend towards 90°, quickly established after a natural strain of 1.2 and is reached with only a few degrees of variation subsequently.

In general, all two-phase grain boundary segment models show more angular variation and less $N_L(y)$ intensity compared to the single-phase models. One exception is the coarse grained, pure shear model (Fig. 3.7f), where a very distinct trend occurs at a natural strain of 0.4 to 1.6 and γ successively (linearly) changes from $\sim 105^{\circ}$ towards $\sim 115^\circ$.

Figure 3.7: Orientation of the minimum and maximum angles *α* **and** *ɣ* **throughout simulated deformation. a) – h) Semi-circular rose diagrams of values for maximum and minimum GBSI density** $N_L(y)$ and $N_L(a)$ (per pixel) and azimuth [[°]] for all eight **simulations. i) Maximum and minimum angle evolution as a function of natural strain for all eight simulations. Angles are measured from segments defined by consecutive boundary nodes. Curves are coloured for coarse grained and fine-grained grain boundary patterns, with two curves each for pure shear single- and two-phase models and three curves each for simple shear single-phase models, two-phase low viscosity, and high viscosity phases. Arrows mark the starting angle at time step 0.**

The ELLE statistical minimum and maximum angles (Fig. 3.7i; Table 3.2) are inverse to $N_L(y)$ and $N_L(\alpha)$ density, as expected. Grain boundary segments perpendicular or close to perpendicular relative to the direction of elongation are least common if SPO is present. Hence, minimum angles (Fig. 3.7i top) and *ɣ* are equivalent. The evolution of all maximum and minimum curves fits very well to the classic strain model for simple shear and pure shear, with immediately rotation for pure shear, and successive convergence for simple shear towards 90/270° and 0/180°.

The azimuths of grain boundary segments intercepted along scan directions α and γ (Appendix B, Fig. B.5 and Table B.1) prove the systematics behind the concepts of intercepts (Panozzo, 1984; Panozzo, 1987). In *ɣ*, increasingly perpendicular oriented segments are intercepted with an increase of strain and SPO strength (Fig. B.4a), and more and more segments rotate and successively 'grow' in length towards the direction of elongation, *α* (Fig. B.4b). Hence, grain boundary segments intercepted along *α* are increasingly closer in angle. The impact of deformation modes and viscosity variation is not distinct enough at this level of analysis.

Selective sampling of corresponding phase boundary segment intercept density and azimuths of *α* shows similar but overall noisier trends compared to the grain boundary segments-based azimuth of *α* (Fig. 3.5b; Appendix B, Fig. B.6b).

3.3.5 Evolution of the GBSI minimum intensity (*Imin***)**

Results from the evolution of minimum GBSI density $N_L(\alpha)$, average orientation dependent GBSI density $\bar{x}N_L(\theta)$ and maximum GBSI density $N_L(y)$ relative to their initial values in the base grain boundary pattern (Fig. 3.8a, c) showed that the $N_L(\alpha)$ curve is mirrored by that of $N_L(y)$, but has stronger pronounced local maxima and minima. The $\bar{x}N_L(\theta)$ curves are smoother.

Curves for two-phase models tend to be closer to the $\bar{x}N_L(\theta)$ curves relative to the single-phase models. In all cases, two-phase model curves are also less smooth compared to their single-phase equivalents, with even smoother shapes defined by the fine-grained models. Logarithmic scale diagrams of minimum intensity *Imin* (Fig. 3.8b, d) for all eight models give a higher magnitude view of the first increment of deformation (especially the first ten time steps up to a natural strain of 0.2), highlighting the variations of the last increment (Fig. 3.8). The data for the fine-grained models defined curves with good fit $(R^2 \ge 0.9)$, whereas coarse grained models have more variance of data ($R^2 \ge 0.65$) (Table 3.3). The main difference visible in both datasets is that the single-phase model data has more consistent absolute values and lower *Imin* with increasing natural strain.

Figure 3.8: Minimum GBSI density *NL(α)***, maximum GBSI density** *NL(ɣ)***, average GBSI** density $\overline{x}N_L(\theta)$, and minimum intensity I_{min} as a function of natural strain (ε_n) . a) Simple **shear and c) pure shear curves of the** $N_L(\alpha)$ **,** $N_L(\gamma)$ **and** $\overline{x}N_L(\theta)$ **fraction relative to their** starting density. Fine grained models after time step 75 (ε_n = 1.5) were analysed at time steps 80, 90 and 100 $(\varepsilon_n = 1.6; 1.8;$ and 2). b) Simple shear and d) pure shear logarithmic scale diagrams of I_{min} plotted against natural strain. Time step θ ($\varepsilon_n = 0$) is not included **due to the logarithmic scale. Data of the fine-grained models after time step 75 was not included. Black arrows A and B mark prominent local minima at** $\varepsilon_n = 1.16$ **; and 1.22.**

The single-phase model curves drop at a higher rate in *Imin* and are almost linear after a natural strain of \sim 1.4 (Fig. 3.8). The I_{min} curves of the two-phase models tend to have shallower slopes initially, followed by significant fluctuations developing after a natural strain of ~ 0.7 (Fig. 3.8).

The most significant deviation from the fitted curves occurs as local minima (labelled A and B in Fig. 3.8c, d). Both, simple shear two-phase models have local minima of around 1.16-1.18 natural strain. These minima are stronger in the case of the coarsegrained simple shear two-phase model, where it is flanked by two strong maxima (Fig. 3.8b). The pure shear local minimum B is very distinct from the coarse-grained pure shear two-phase in the logarithmic diagram (Fig. 3.8d). The minimum value B is reached at a natural strain of 1.22.

A and B reflect heterogeneity in the grain boundary patterns. All pure shear models, except that of the fine-grained two-phase model, show a characteristic pattern. Repeatedly *Imin* data points align with successive increases towards higher *Imin* until a jump to a lower *Imin* (Fig. 3.8d)

The trends for *Imin* plotted against *εn* (Table. 3.4) best fit an exponential curve for the single-phase models. The coefficient of determination (R^2) for coarse grained singlephase simple shear is at 0.958 and even > 0.98 for the other three single-phase models (Table 3.3). The R^2 values for the two-phase model fit better to a logarithmic curve but with low coefficients of determination of 0.65 for the two-phase simple shear coarse grained model, whereas they are 0.86 and 0.90 for the coarse-grained pure shear and fine-grained simple shear two-phase models (Table 3.3). The two-phase fine grained pure shear model has the best R^2 value with an exponential curve (0.94) (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3: Trend line fitting for I_{min} **plotted against** ε_n **,. Additional to Figure 3.8. Exp. = exponential:** $y = a^{-nx}$; Log. = logarithmic: $y = -aln(x)+b$.

3.4 Discussion

3.4.1 SPO evolution during plane strain and effects of a second phase on SPO development

3.4.1.1 Single- versus two-phase systems

The minimum intensity (*Imin*) data plotted against natural strain *εn* (Fig. 3.8b, d) shows that the viscosity contrast in two-phase models has a major impact on SPO development. By comparison, the strain geometry is of minor influence and visible from the aligned data with a successive increase towards higher *Imin* feature of pure shear data (Fig. 3.8a,b; Appendix B, Fig. B.7). Dual viscosity (two-phase models) results in higher *Imin* values as well as local minima and maxima in the case of simple shear. The absence of dynamic recrystallization and deformation being limited to dislocation glide may explain why less variation between the models is inevitable at low natural strains.

The splitting into two major trends depending on viscosity variation shows that the SPO is developing earlier and stronger in the single-phase models. The cause is that two-phase specific SPOs with different shape elongation and weaker preferred orientation evolve dynamically through the models. Therefore, different viscosity contrasts and variation of phase content should plot as different *Imin* trends. The presence of a viscosity contrast between two-phases changes the elongation and rotation behaviour of all grains in the system, and consequently the evolution of grain boundary segment length, angle, and density evolution of the grain boundary pattern.

The two-phase models portray significantly different evolutions for low and high viscosity grains (Fig. 3.3, 3.4). The low viscosity grains quickly form low *Imin* because their elongation is rapid, which results in most grain boundaries in the pattern being long and parallel to each other, thus SPO is strong and GBSI results are more distinct. The high viscosity grains do not develop a strong SPO in the two-phase models. They elongate only slightly, and their finite rotation is variable, ultimately resulting in higher *I_{min}* trends for the two-phase models. These higher *I_{min}* trends of two-phase models exist because there is a dominance of the grain boundary segments of high viscosity grains over the sigmoidal character of the low viscosity grain boundaries through the phase boundaries.

3.4.1.2 Successive increase of *Imin* at high natural strains

The strain versus *Imin* curves of the pure shear models (Fig. 3.8c,d) show an artefact that gets successively stronger with ongoing deformation. The GBSI density reduces significantly within the first time steps ('jumps') and then flattens for several consecutive time steps, with a slight increase of *Imin* only in pure shear models. There is an increase of $N_L(y)$ and $\bar{x}N_L(\theta)$ during that phase of deformation (Fig. 3.8c), which causes a slight increase of *Imin*. As soon as the number of GBSIs along *α* decreases by losing a single GBSI, there is a jump towards lower *Imin*. The fine grained two-phase pure shear model rarely displays this behaviour due to its fine grain size coupled with the weaker SPO (Fig. 3.8d, purple). The fine grained, single-phase, pure shear model (Fig. 3.8c,d, yellow) has smaller *Imin* decrease, and more frequent offsets (jumps) between shorter aligned *Imin* sections compared to the coarse-grained models (Fig. 3.8c,d, beige and pink).

A correction for a curve fit (exponential or other) is to exclude all but the lowest *Imin* value from such an upwards trending alignment of data points and recalculate the trend line. Exclusion of all *Imin* values that are higher than the ones before results in exponential trend line R^2 values rising to 0.99 for pure shear coarse grained and fine grained single-phase.

3.4.1.3 Grain boundary pattern evolution

The average viscosity in the two-phase models is lower than that of the single-phase models because of the addition of a low-viscosity phase, whereas the 'strong' phase remains identical across both models. So, one might anticipate strong fabrics to develop in the two-phase models.

Observations of the microstructural evolution (Fig. 3.3) confirm that viscosity contrast strongly influences the deformation behaviour and that clusters of grains with the same viscosity are formed that change the deformation dynamics. However, elongation and rotation of the low viscosity phase are highly impacted by the presence of the high viscosity phase. Elongation and rotation are slowed down and in parts stopped, depending on the neighbouring grain characteristics (viscosity, shape) and behaviour (viscosity, formation of clusters). Clusters are formed by grains that deform in a similar manner to one another. All these findings are in agreement with those made in studies involving simulations of conglomerates (Samanta and Bhattacharyya, 2003; Jessell et al*.*, 2009; Ran et al*.*, 2018).

The results from grain boundary segment azimuth analysis match the observations from the grain deformation from the maps (Fig. 3.3). The presence of two phases results in the formation of two different SPOs in the case of simple shear (Fig. 3.4), where elongation and rotation are different for each phase. The rotation of grains due to simulated deformation is not as homogeneous as in the single-phase models, even at higher natural strain and stronger SPO.

The formation of shear bands in a two-phase aggregate results in wider orientation variations in the grain boundary segment azimuth rose. For pure shear (Fig. 3.3b), twophase models, the rotation and the SPO seem to be equally strong for both viscosities through deformation, whereas elongation is an order of magnitudes apart.

The individual SPOs of the two viscosities in the two-phase models is weaker compared to the SPOs of the single-phase pure shear models. This results in the almost symmetric grain boundary segment roses. It can be concluded that two-phase, no matter what strain geometry was active, results in weaker SPOs compared to singlephase for a given strain.

3.4.1.4 Local maxima and minima *Imin* evolution in two-phase models

Both two-phase, simple shear grain boundary models (Fig. 3.8b) show a local minimum *Imin* labelled A around a natural strain of 1.16 and 1.14. The fine grained two-phase pure shear model (Fig. 3.9d) does not show any such distinct local variation.

The coarse grained two-phase pure shear model conversely has a strong local minimum, B (Fig. 3.8c and d).

Figure 3.9: Grain boundary pattern characteristics as a reason for local *Imin* **minima and maxima and the role of two phases. a) Grain boundary pattern of coarse grained twophase simple shear model at local minimum A (Fig. 3.8a,b; time step 58,** ε_n **= 1.16) with orientation** α **and location of minimum GBSI density scan line marked (blue line). b) Contoured GBSI density rose plots for local minimum A and the neighbouring local maxima (maximum 1 at time step 39,** $\varepsilon_n = 0.78$ **; grey contour and arrows; and maximum** 2 at time step 67, ε_n = 1.34; orange contour and arrows). The GBSI density (per pixel) is **plotted against scan line orientation. Analysis was done using a single rotation centre with 0.5° angles between scan lines, placed in the centre of the analysed map. c) Part of the grain boundary pattern of the fine grained two-phase simple shear model at the time step of local minimum A (Fig. 3.8a,b; time step 57) with orientation and location of minimum GBSI density scan line marked.**

The explanation for local maxima and minima is heterogeneity in the grain distribution in the pattern, amplified by the difference in elongation between the two viscosity grain populations. It is also an effect that is minimized by finer grain size. For coarse grained two-phase simple shear models, grain boundary map, and contoured GBSI density rose plots of the local minimum A (Fig. 3.9a, b) show that almost exclusively grain boundaries of high viscosity grains with lower elongation are intercepted along α , which results in a distinctive low minimum density. All three contours have a rectangular shape, except for a very narrow waist at the natural strain of the local minimum A.

The rectangular shape of the plots means that there is a range of high GBSI density orientations. The elongation of the low viscosity grains is orders of magnitudes higher (Fig. 3.4), these grains are mostly of sigmoidal shape, and often come as parallel grain clusters. Thus, $N_L(\alpha)$ can decrease if mostly low viscosity grain boundaries are intercepted. In the case of the fine-grained minimum A, the grain boundary map (Fig. 3.9c) shows that more high viscosity grains are intercepted, but they also are strongly aligned.

Local grain boundary pattern anomalies of a very good alignment of low viscosity grains or mostly high viscosity grain boundary intercepts are the cause for local deviation of *Imin* trends. Due to the strain geometry pure shear, the number of GBSIs drops significantly with increasing strain and in a coarser grained two-phase setting (Fig. 3.8d), which adds to heterogeneous pattern characteristics, phenomena like minimum B, as well as the following variation of data points are to be expected. Overall, local trend variation seems to increase with increasing strain.

3.4.1.5 GBSI density evolution

Contoured rose plots of GBSI density (Fig. 3.6) show essential differences between simple shear and pure shear in form of round hourglass shapes (Fig. 3.6a to d) and the 'tipped' hourglass shapes (Fig. 3.6e to h). There is an additional difference between single- and two-phase for pure shear, though the formation of a 'fan' shape with lateral (local) $N_L(y)$, highlighting the individual SPOs of the two viscosities in the two-phase models.

The microstructural effects of dual viscosity (two-phase models) are visible in terms of overall higher GBSI density increase (and inversely proportional decrease). The effect of a second phase, with less distinct bulk preferred orientation compared to single-phase models (e.g., Fig. 3.3) can be connected to this GBSI density difference.

3.4.2 Phase boundary evolution

The phase distribution of the two-phase models was statistically homogeneous at the initial time step (0), therefore the variation in distribution and size of clusters in coarse grained and fine-grained models is also supposed to be homogeneous. However, due to the size of multi-grain clusters, a certain sampling volume is required to negate local inhomogeneity. The coarse-grained phase boundary maps, and the comparison of the corresponding phase and grain boundary segment azimuth rose plots (Fig. 3.2a,c) show inhomogeneity, indicating the GBSI density analysis of the two-phase coarse grained phase boundary segment models had higher 'statistical noise' than the fine grained two-phase model (Appendix B, Fig. B.6b). Analysis of phase boundary evolution in is subjected to higher statistical noise than corresponding grain boundary segment analysis, and the number of potential intercepts for any scan line orientation is lower.

Despite higher statistical noise, analysis of phase boundary segment azimuths, and intercept density reflect results from the corresponding grain boundary segment analysis, with strong influence of SPO, strain geometry, and connected formation of shear bands (Fig. 3.4, 3.5, and 3.10; Appendix B, Fig. B.6).

Figure 3.10: Phase boundary pattern characteristics as a reason for local *Imin* **minima and maxima. a) Phase boundary pattern of coarse grained two-phase simple shear model** at local minimum A (Fig. 3.9a,b; time step 58, ε_n = 1.16) with orientation α and location **of minimum GBSI density scan line marked (blue line). b) Equal area, length-weighted**

phase boundary segment orientation rose plot at local minimum A, with mean segment orientation marked. c) GBSI density rose plot at local minimum A, using one central radial scan line centre with 0.5° angles between scan lines for analysis. The GBSI density (per pixel) is plotted against scan line orientation as blue contour.

Phase boundary analysis of the coarse grained two-phase simple shear model at natural strain $\varepsilon_n = 1.16$ (time step 58) where local I_{min} minimum A was detected (Fig. 3.8a,b, and 3.9a,b) shows that only two phase boundaries are intercepted along α detected by GBSI density analysis. Boundary segment intercept density analysis of the phase and grain boundary segment pattern show that the minimum density azimuth is 15° at local minimum A (Fig. 3.9b, and 3.10a,c). This is in support of local *Imin* maxima and minima due to phase cluster distribution heterogeneity in the pattern.

3.4.3 Appraisal of the GBSI method

3.4.3.1 The use of one radial scan line centre for GBSI density analysis

The difference of $\bar{x}N_L(\theta)$ for the initial grain boundary patterns (Fig. 3.1e; Table 3.1) is due to the placement of the radial scan lines. The closer a pattern is to isotropy, the more susceptible α values are to angular variations given the stochastic effects. The grain size histograms and grain boundary segment azimuth roses are similar for simple shear and pure shear (Fig. 3.1c, d) because the same dataset is simply multiplied. The radial scan line centre for GBSI analysis is always placed in the centre of a map and thus, the analysed data is different.

For the 1:2 base map of pure shear, a different section of the same base grain boundary pattern is analysed. As the patterns are stipulated to have homogeneous initial grain size and grain size distribution, the difference between simple shear and pure shear is only slight in terms of the density contours and $\bar{x}N_L(\theta)$.

Multiple radial scans or a scan line grid-based analysis would give a more profound result with standard deviations. It can be argued that the minimal difference means that the analysis with one scan line centre is sufficient to quantify pattern anisotropy and therefore SPO. Also, pattern characteristics that change progressive or sectional could be analysed with the placement of multiple rotation centres along a profile. The same spatial resolution concept is applicable to scan line grids. In summary, multiple scan line centres, as well as scan line grids, can either provide a result with standard deviation, or give a gradual change of GBSI pattern density and thus, quantify strain variations across an area of analysis.

3.4.3.2 Evolution of minimum and maximum GBSI density angles *α* and *ɣ*

The comparison between *α, ɣ* and the connection to the strain field (i.e., the orientation of minimum and maximum angle from the ELLE statistics) shows angular inconsistency of the GBSI-based orientations (Fig. 3.7). The fine-grained models (Fig. 3.7c, d, g, h; Table 3.3) have a better fit to the ELLE trends (Fig. 3.7i). Therefore, grain size plays a major role for α and γ . α generally shows less variation in comparison to the ELLE minimum angle trends but is still off by a few degrees.

The variation of α is a source of error for I_{min} , but not of major importance for SPO strength quantification if $d\beta$ is small and thus, the detected $N_L(\alpha)$ is close to the GBSI density in grain elongation direction. Longest (maximum) and shortest (minimum) axis of the strain ellipsoid are necessarily perpendicular to each other (e.g., Ramsay, 1976; Fossen, 2016), which is indicated by the ELLE statistics minimum and maximum angle relationship (Fig. 3.7i). α and γ show this relation only approximately (Fig. 3.7a to h; Appendix B, Fig. B.5; Tables B.1, B.2).

Due to this angular 'imprecision' of the detected orientations not mirroring the strain ellipse long and short axis and not being perpendicular to each other, strain analysis should not be conducted using GBSI density method alone. The diversion from a perpendicular relationship between minima and maxima is known from intercept methods and has been criticized before (Trayner, 1986; Webber, 2012). However, it can still be argued that α and γ are direct measurements, showing that especially at low strain, there is a discrepancy between grain shape/grain boundary pattern and strain ellipse. Multiple scan line centres, smaller *dβ* (> 0.5°), even finer grain size or a scan line grid approach might provide more information about the precision for angle determination.

The coarse grained, two-phase, pure shear model diverts from the perpendicular relation, especially for its detected *ɣ*. This is visible in the contoured rose plot of GBSI density (Fig. 3.6f) and from the way *α* and *ɣ* plot in the semi-circular rose diagrams (Fig. 3.7f). Data smoothing approaches have been explored before to resolve the equivalents of angles of *α* and *γ* for strain analysis using SURFOR, inverse SURFOR (Panozzo, 1983; 1984; 1987) and intercept method (Launeau and Robin, 1996; Launeau et al., 2010).

A cause for the consecutive formation of 'alternative' ɣ over several time steps is due to pattern inhomogeneity combined with sampling issues. With only one rotation scan line, limited in scan line length by the shortest dimension of the map that significantly shrinks due to the deformation mode of pure shear, the amount of data analysed is successively shrinking and thus, it is easy to create different *ɣ*. Pattern heterogeneity in form of clusters of strongly elongated, low viscosity grains can also explain these results. In comparison, neither the single-phase pure shear models, nor the fine grained two-phase pure shear model shows such strong alternative *ɣ* trends.

3.4.4 Geological implications

The results of this study are most relevant for rocks or materials that have undergone deformation in the dislocation glide field, as our results may be transferable to such microstructure evolutions in nature. Dislocation glide is mostly active in low- to medium-grade metamorphic rocks. Additionally, it is possible to use GBSI methods on rocks that have more than one phase and thus, complex grain boundary patterns for SPO quantification. This qualifies GBSI methods once again for quantification of directional grain boundary pattern anisotropy, with implications for the impact of grain boundaries on seismic velocity anisotropy in rocks.

Two future objectives for the use of minimum intensity should be considered:

1 - There is a potential to reconstruct unknown parameters for deformation. If *Imin* of a sample is known, normal or log-log diagrams can be used to determine a range of natural strain for the sample and the other way around, reconstruction of a range of *Imin* (SPO strength) from natural strain is possible. The same principle should work with parameters like fitted ellipse axial ratio or the ratio calculated from ELLE statistics.

 $2 - If a sample I_{min}$ and either the natural strain ε_n , or the fitted ellipse axial ratio are known, which is a portrait of the strain conditions and SPO, a trend line (exponential if strain is used or power if elongation is available) can be calculated using the theoretical initial perfect pattern, where all grains are isometric (Panozzo, 1984; Srivastava, 1995), that is plotting at $I_{min} = 1$ and $\varepsilon_n = 0$. The calculation of such trend lines bears the possibility to reconstruct the past and future of SPO and pattern

evolution throughout the deformation of a sample, if strain conditions and deformation mechanism do not change. Testing with further model variations, dynamic recrystallization, grain size variation, different viscosity settings and more is necessary to refine this method and make it applicable for real samples.

3.4.5 Future directions

This study provides important tests of the capabilities of a grain boundary-based pattern characterisation. Beneficial future research prospects are:

i) Refinement of the GBSI method, i.e., scan line density, frequency, and distribution.

ii) Study the capabilities of the method to quantify different deformation mechanisms and parameters, i.e., dislocation climb, grain boundary migration/sliding via tracing the evolution of simulated pattern deformation.

iii) Development towards 3D models for GBSI density, to study the impact of grain boundaries on acoustic wave velocity anisotropy of aggregates.

iv) Applications of the GBSI density method to real rocks, including a workflow that incorporates grain boundary segment azimuth and fitted ellipse-based and other established SPO quantification methods to further assess/exploit the comparative strengths and weaknesses of the GBSI method approach.

3.5 Conclusions

This study is the first attempt of tracking grain boundary segment characteristics systematically during the ongoing (simulated) deformation and by using a GBSI method in combination with other quantification methods for grains and grain boundaries. The main response to simulated deformation is the formation of SPO, which increases over the duration of deformation. A single foliation develops in the single-phase models, whereas shear bands form in the two-phase models. Additionally, the GBSI method was used to analyse the phase boundary pattern evolution during deformation of the two-phase models. The size of grain boundary datasets (grain size) has a visible influence, which is mostly statistical, and results are scalable.

Grain size affects the sampling statistics such that the finer the grain size, the clearer the results. There is less variation in the intensity of intercepts in fine grained models compared to the coarse-grained models. All major trends are visible in coarse grained and fine-grained model results. But phenomena like the 'false' maximum density orientation or the minimum intercept local minimum A and B are stronger and more common compared to the fine-grained examples.

The comparison of single- and two-phase simulations shows that phase composition has a strong influence on the grain boundary development, which is recorded by the GBSI method.

- Dual viscosity (two-phase models) results in the development of shear bands with \bullet weaker SPO of each phase, individually and combined, compared to single-phase models. Each of the two grain phase populations changes in shape and shape orientation, which proves to be interdependent of each other's distribution (cluster formation) and neighbouring grain contacts.
- SPO is stronger in single-phase models compared to two-phase models at any \bullet given natural strain > 0.04, and independent from the end-member strain model.
- The grain boundary segment azimuth analysis shows the weaker SPO in the two- \bullet phase models by a broader range of weaker peaks.
- This weaker SPO is visible in the GBSI density contour plots by weaker minima and maxima of two-phase patterns, with higher minimum intensity compared to single-phase models.
- GBSI density based minimum intensity (*Imin*) analysis shows that differences are \bullet minimal at low strains and become more pronounced after > 0.2 natural strain, with two-phase models having weaker GBSI density minima and maxima.

Grain boundary-based analysis can differentiate between strain geometries. SPO develops after ~ 0.1 natural strain in both, simple and pure shear models. , A preferred orientation quickly stabilises in pure shear, and evolves in orientation in simple shear. This is in agreement with literature and models of shear zones.

- Grain boundary segment azimuth roses show different mean orientation evolution \bullet depending on strain geometry.
- The pure shear models have a slightly stronger SPO compared to simple shear \bullet models. GBSI density based *Imin* for the simple shear models is always slightly higher.

The difference between simple shear and pure shear is very clear from the shape \bullet of the GBSI density contour evolution, whereas minima and maxima are roughly the same strength.

Results from GBSI analysis limited to phase boundaries show similar but weaker trends compared to grain boundary pattern analysis that disregards grain mineralogy. Using the same set of methods, phase boundary analysis of the two-phase models is more impacted by fabric heterogeneity due to the size of the dataset and nature of the phase distribution in the models. Signals from SPO and strain geometry are noisier, showing that application of this method to analyse phase boundary segments needs to be selective and results should be treated with caution.

A combination of several methods for SPO quantification is preferable for a detailed analysis. GBSI-based contour and *Imin* analysis have great value for comparing grain boundary patterns with each other in greater detail than a method that is summarising data or depends on a uniform dataset of i.e., ooids. Samples from different areas of a shear zone can be easily compared to each other using minimum intensity *Imin*. Further, combined with grain elongation or strain, GBSI *Imin* is useful to compare different geological settings with each other.

CHAPTER 4

Effects of mixed phase content, fractures, and grain boundary anisotropy on acoustic wave velocities in evaporites

Abstract

It has been recognized that acoustic wave velocity anisotropy in evaporite rocks is not only controlled by crystallographic (preferred) orientation but that other factors like grain boundary alignment, fractures, fluid inclusions, and mixtures of evaporitic minerals contribute too. However, how each of them contributes specifically and their combined impact on acoustic wave velocity anisotropy is not yet fully understood.

This study analyses crystallographic orientation, grain boundary pattern characteristics, fracture distribution, and the presence of veins of second mineral phases with the aim of constraining their likely impact on acoustic wave velocity anisotropy of evaporites. Ultrasonic wave velocity data for bulk aggregates of various pure and mixed phase evaporite samples are measured from cuboid and core samples. The microstructure of the core samples was then analysed for crystallographic orientation (using electron backscatter diffraction), grain boundary pattern geometry (using the modified grain boundary intercept method and grain fitted ellipse approach), phase content (via greyscale threshold analysis of backscattered electron images), and fracture and vein distribution and geometry (using the FracPaQ toolbox).

The presented velocity measurements for natural evaporites with halite, polyhalite, anhydrite, gypsum, and mixed phase rocks from three deposits (North Sea, Òdena, Boulby) show significant velocity anisotropy. Maximum seismic velocity anisotropy for P wave, (*AVP*) is 60 % and maximum seismic velocity anisotropy for S wave (*AVS*) is 34 % for a sample from Boulby mine. Also, the *V_P* and *V_S* ranges are generally lower than expected according to single crystal ranges. Microstructural analysis of North Sea anhydrite showed mean anhydrite grain sizes between 26.50 ± 31.61 µm and 89.71 ± 57.32 µm, with maximum grain sizes of 430 µm to 493 µm. Systematic preferred orientation of grain boundaries is caused by a dual shape preferred orientation of orthogonally oriented elongate blocky anhydrite grains. Òdena anhydrite with gypsum has common spherulitic features comprising radial bladed anhydrite

grains with minor gypsum distributed along grain boundaries. Crystallographic preferred orientation in anhydrite form both point clusters and weak girdle distributions of {100} and {001} poles, with an absence of mechanical twins and few low-angle (< 10°) boundaries, interpreted to represent dynamic recrystallisation by grain boundary migration and potentially subgrain rotation (associated with Regime 1). Gypsum veins are also preferred systematically oriented.

The grain boundary microstructure and systematic gypsum vein network are potentially the cause for the slow and anisotropic nature of the measured ultrasonic velocities in these rocks. This study adds to the limited dataset on velocity anisotropy in evaporitic rocks and presents a workflow to build on in future studies to quantify the impact of petrofabrics on acoustic wave velocity anisotropy more rigorously.

4.1 Introduction

Evaporite deposits are part of many sedimentary basins worldwide, and commonly form stratigraphic detachment horizons (e.g., Jura fold belt), and/or intrusive salt diapirs (e.g., North German plain). Oil and gas are often trapped in reservoirs in or next to such salt structures. In seismic imaging, salt deposits have generally been treated as homogeneous bodies in terms of their internal structure and composition, which is often assumed to be pure halite and is close to isotropic in its petrophysical properties.

Yet, evaporitic rock salt structures and formations are commonly polymineralic, incorporating anisotropic minerals such as gypsum, anhydrite, polyhalite, and carnallite. Furthermore, the low strength of the minerals that comprise rock salt enables ductile flow under upper crustal conditions, and this deformation is associated with the formation of strong petrofabrics, which also result in the development of anisotropy. However, it is unknown to what extent mineralogical and textural variations contribute to P- and S- wave velocity anisotropy (*AVP* and *AVS*, respectively): published acoustic velocity data on polymineralic evaporites are rare; and studies of evaporites tend to concentrate on deformation mechanisms and microstructures in monomineralic aggregates of the three main evaporitic minerals: halite, anhydrite, and gypsum. Nevertheless, errors in interpretation of seismic reflection data can be expensive if, for example, discovered at the drilling stage in oil exploration.

The acoustic impedance of rock salt results in transparent zones and zones of chaotic reflectors. Travel-time effects due to anisotropy often lead to false localisation of subsalt oil traps (Raymer et al. 2000b). Rock salt bodies generally show high-level structural complexity and associated large velocity contrasts (Raymer and Kendall, 1997). There is a need to improve seismic images and seismic velocity models, which is the overall objective of this study. Furthermore, new data will be of great significance to the mining industry (e.g., potash, table salt), agencies considering the storage of waste and geo-energy (e.g., hydrogen and compressed air in salt caverns) in salt structures, and the understanding of rheology and dynamics in sedimentary basins and mountain belts.

The aims of this study are to: (a) increase the database of ultrasonic velocity measurements from natural evaporites; (b) characterise petrofabrics of natural evaporites that comprise anisotropic minerals anhydrite and gypsum by quantifying their crystallographic preferred orientation (CPO) and shape preferred orientation (SPO); and (c) to investigate the effects of mineralogy, microstructures, and crystallography on ultrasonic wave velocity anisotropy in natural evaporites.

Directional ultrasonic velocity measurements were collected from five cuboid samples with different natural evaporitic mineral compositions, including halite, halite with clay, potash, polyhalite, and anhydrite, and twelve cores from two different natural sample suites: pure anhydrite; and anhydrite plus gypsum. Quantification of CPO, grain size, shape, and SPO were analysed via electron backscatter diffraction (EBSD) mapping, backscattered electron (BSE) image analysis, and grain boundary and fracture pattern analysis (FracPaQ; Healy et al.*,* 2017; GBPaQ, see chapter 2 of this thesis) of oriented thin sections.

4.1.1 Deformation and petrofabric development in evaporites

The significant mineralogical and physical differences between some of the over 80 evaporitic minerals (Steward, 1963) can ultimately result in strong petrofabrics in rock salt bodies, and these fabrics control the ultrasonic velocity anisotropy. Natural evaporitic rock salt can be complex in terms of its polymineralic character, its strong fabrics, and other microstructures. All these factors can have an impact on the velocity characteristics (including velocity anisotropy), but their effects remain to be fully explored and understood.

Deformation mechanisms (e.g., dislocation creep, pressure-solution creep) and deformation processes (e.g., intracrystalline recovery) control the formation and evolution of rock deformation microstructures. These result in flow laws, which control the deformation of the rocks at a larger scale. Lithology and microstructure determine the dominant deformation processes (and vice versa) through mineralogical composition, spatial distribution of phases, inter-granular fluids, porosity, permeability, grain size, and crystallographic preferred orientation. All those factors

are known to, or have been considered to, influence acoustic velocity anisotropy (Fig.

Figure 4.1: Shear wave splitting, resulting from the propagation of a wave through an anisotropic medium. After Garnero, E. J. (http://garnero.asu.edu/research _images/index.html).

Crystallographic preferred orientation (CPO) is assumed to have the strongest control on *intrinsic* anisotropy (e.g., Vargas-Meleza et al.*,* 2015). CPO is commonly caused by dislocation creep, and therefore depends on the operative slip systems for dislocation glide in constituent minerals. Dislocation creep and intracrystalline recovery are significantly enhanced by the presence of grain boundary fluid inclusions (Urai et al. 1986a,b). Dynamic recrystallisation by grain boundary migration (GBM) or pure recrystallisation (static grain growth) may create a GBM-induced CPO by favouring certain crystallographic orientations or remove grains with unfavourable orientations for dislocation glide. The characteristics of a CPO pattern depend on: a) the type of operating slip systems and their relative activity; b) the strain rate and bulk strain field (i.e., flattening, constriction) that determines towards which direction crystals tend to rotate and thereby the shape of the fabric; c) the finite strain; and d) the kinematic vorticity (Passchier and Trouw, 2005).

In halite-dominated rocks, two main deformation mechanisms have been identified from microstructural analysis: dislocation creep and pressure solution in combination with grain boundary sliding (GBS; Boullier and Gueguen, 1975; Poirier, 1985). In nature, rock salt deforms in the transition between these two mechanisms (e.g., Urai 1987; Spiers et al.*,* 1990; Desbois et al.*,* 2010). Within the dislocation creep regime, two sub-cases occur; dry halite (and halite at low temperatures), where subgrain rotation (SGR) dominates, and wet halite (and halite at high temperatures), where grain boundary migration (GBM) is active (Urai et al.*,* 2008). The primary, most easily activated orthogonal slip systems in halite (which is cubic) are $\{110\} < 110$, followed by {100}<110> and {111}<110> (e.g., Franssen, 1993; 1994; Skrotzki et al.*,* 1996; Linckens et al.*,* 2016). The type of slip system that is active in a crystal depends on the orientation and magnitude of the stress field with respect to the crystallographic orientation of the grain and on the critical resolved shear stress (CRSS) for the specific slip system (Passchier and Trouw, 2005). The CRSS contrast between these three slip systems is 1, 2, and 3, respectively, but the stress exponent is normally assumed to be high $(n = 7)$ for the halite slip systems.

Anhydrite has been studied with a focus on texture development and CPO evolution (e.g., Ross et al.*,* 1987; Heidelbach et al.*,* 2001). High-temperature deformation experiments showed that anhydrite deforms either through twinning and dislocation creep with SGR, as well as grain and twin boundary migration (Regime 1), or through diffusion creep combined with GBS, which is grain size sensitive (Regime 2) (Dell'Angelo and Olgaard, 1995). Both flow regimes result in a CPO. The transition between the two flow regimes can be regarded as a third regime, where recrystallisation via SGR, diffusion creep, dislocation creep, and possible grain boundary sliding occur (Dell'Angelo and Olgaard, 1995). Three slip systems and one twin mode have been identified in anhydrite (e.g., Heidelbach et al.*,* 2001; Hildyard et al.*,* 2009; 2011a). Glide systems are (100)[001], (100)[010], and (001)[100] in the Cmcm space group (orthorhombic) reference frame (Hildyard et al.*,* 2009; 2011a). Deformation twinning in anhydrite mostly occurs along {110} and can be described by crystallographic rotation relative to the host crystal (misorientation) around an axis parallel to [100] by 83.5° (e.g., Klassen-Neklyudova, 1964; Hildyard et al.*,* 2009). Naturally, deformed anhydrite can preserve fibre textures with strong point maxima in poles to {001}, and weaker point clusters and girdles in poles to {100} and {010} (Hildyard et al.*,* 2011a; Vargas-Meleza et al.*,* 2015). An accompanying SPO can have a strong relationship with CPO such that grain long axes (elongation directions) at high angles to <001> (short dimension of the grains) (Hildyard et al.*,* 2011a).

Deformation experiments on wet, granular gypsum (De Meer and Spiers, 1997) show grain boundary diffusion and pressure solution, with precipitation of new gypsum being the controlling factor. Gypsum has monoclinic symmetry, with space group C2/c. Natural gypsum-dominated deposits can form CPOs with girdle-like clusters of poles to {100} parallel to the foliation and poles to {010} clustered perpendicular to the foliation (Vargas-Meleza et al.*,* 2015). Carnallite deforms plastically through intracrystalline slip and mechanical twinning, whereas recrystallization operates via SGR as well as GBM and solution transfer under natural conditions (Urai and Boland, 1985; Urai et al., 1986a,b; 1987). There are no published studies on the deformation mechanisms of polyhalite.

4.1.2 Controls on ultrasonic wave velocity anisotropy

Ultrasonic waves are high frequency, short wavelength acoustic waves that migrate through solid media and are readily measured to high degrees of accuracy for rock samples using acoustic emission equipment (e.g., Lo et al.*,* 1986; Mah and Schmitt, 2003; Vargas-Meleza et al.*,* 2015). The velocity essentially depends on the material density and elastic properties. Velocity anisotropy describes an orientation dependent variation of wave velocity. Velocity measured on dry and homogeneous material is independent of wave frequency, with minimal change of the shape of the signal during the propagation through the material (Popp and Kern, 1998). The transmitted wave can be significantly distorted due to the energy scattering produced by the heterogeneities in heterogeneous rocks (Vargas-Meleza et al.*,* 2015).

Velocity anisotropy of polycrystalline aggregates reflects the bulk mineral alignment, which is equivalent to the dependence on the overall intrinsic crystal structure of the sum of all grains. Structural features like density, orientation, and alignment of grain boundaries, cracks, or pores also have a major impact on seismic velocity anisotropy (e.g., Crampin, 1985; Lo et al.*,* 1986; Popp and Kern, 1998; Raymer and Kendall, 1998; Mah and Schmitt, 2003; Lloyd et al.*,* 2011; Zong et al.*,* 2014). Other factors that have a strong impact are variations in the spatial distribution of phases, changing phase content proportions, layering, grain size and shape fabrics, as well as gradual variations in grain boundary properties (e.g., Kern and Wenk, 1985).

Shape preferred orientation (SPO) is another factor that has been recognised as an important contributor to total anisotropy measured with laboratory ultrasonic velocity tests (e.g., Burlini and Kunze, 2000). The alignment of grain boundaries is dependent on the strength of the SPO, which describes a pattern of elongated grains with a similar orientation of their long and short axes. The stronger the SPO and the more elongated the grains, the more grain boundaries align in an aggregate and the stronger is the predicted contribution to an ultrasonic velocity anisotropy. The formation of SPO depends mainly on strain parameters. The relationship between CPO and SPO and effects on seismic velocity anisotropy in evaporites and sedimentary rocks, in general, are poorly understood (e.g., Valcke et al.*,* 2006), and the effects of SPO are not yet determined for evaporites.

There are many studies on materials and rocks other than rock salt which investigate the relationship between acoustic velocity properties, fabric orientation, and finite strain to understand seismic anisotropy and improve seismic imaging, to gain a better understanding of those parameters. A focus lies on monomineralic and polymineralic aggregates (crustal-scale shear zone, Almqvist et al.*,* 2013; Carrara marble mylonites, Burlini and Kunze, 2000; lower continental crust, Lloyd et al.*,* 2011; mylonitic quartz, Lloyd and Kendall, 2005; sandstone, shale and granite, Lo et al.*,* 1986).

An established workflow is based on using a 'rock recipe' approach with data that are derived from measured CPOs of each individual mineral, respectively on subsets of individual rock fabric CPO, combined with their modal proportions (Lloyd et al.*,* 2011). This rock recipe approach uses the data from the measured polycrystalline aggregates, including the measured CPO, with different modal compositions to create a model for changing composition. The fabric recipe approach conversely uses subsets of individual rock fabric CPO instead of modal composition and thus, allows the effect of different fabrics, meaning foliations, to be studied from the seismic response (e.g.,

Lloyd et al.*,* 2011). Alternative approaches for the estimation of velocity anisotropy from CPOs are those of Zhong et al. (2014) and Vel et al. (2016).

Recently, researchers have started to identify new ways to create more precise seismic velocity models (e.g., Oliveira et al.*,* 2015; Jones and Davison, 2014). The approach involves the identification and quantification of the differences between velocity models and natural rock salt deposits. The developed method uses amplitude response to differentiate and identify rock velocities and consequently lithological heterogeneities (e.g., Oliveira et al.*,* 2015; González et al.*,* 2016). It has only been applied on velocity models from the Brazilian basins and is still in the developing stage (e.g., Meneguim et al.*,* 2015; Jardim et al.*,* 2015; Barros et al.*,* 2017).

Deviation of models from nature is also caused by the omission of seismic velocity anisotropy as an effect of intrinsic crystal structure, respectively CPO. The assumptions that evaporitic bodies are homogeneous and isotropic for seismic velocity models are valid in cases where halite is the main constituent in natural rock salt bodies, typically with an abundance of \sim 95 % (Raymer and Kendall, 1997). However, an assumption of isotropy can cause false reflector depths for anisotropic bodies (e.g., Raymer and Kendall, 1997; Jones and Davison, 2014). Jones and Davison (2014) list anisotropy representation and parameterization as one of the major pitfalls when rock salt bodies are involved in seismic imaging. The need to include anisotropy in seismological studies of the crust, nonetheless, is increasingly recognised (Mah and Schmitt, 2003; Prasse et al.*,* 2020).

Research on mixed evaporite phases and the corresponding effect on microstructures and ultrasonic velocity properties, specifically anisotropy, is extremely rare in the literature. Ross et al. (1987) performed simple shear experiments on anhydrite-halite mylonites and state that the effect of phase mixing on the strength of CPO is not significant in comparison to single phase experiments. Raymer and Kendall (1997) looked at rock salt with anhydrite as secondary phases and concluded that there is a potential large effect of anhydrite alignment (CPO) on bulk elastic anisotropy, contributing to the high anisotropy of anhydrite. Trippetta et al. (2010) measured Pwave velocity using an alternating sequence of anhydrite and gypsum. They conclude that the resulting seismic anisotropy is generally low and that the average P-wave velocity (V_P) increases with increasing confining pressure. They also inferred from their results that cracks influence V_P only in dry conditions and for low confining pressure (Trippetta et al.*,* 2010). Basic gypsum seismic velocity anisotropy data was obtained by Levin (1979), who measured seismic velocity in weathered gypsum-rich rocks.

Vargas-Meleza et al. (2015) investigated the influence of relative mineral contribution of halite, anhydrite, and gypsum to seismic velocity anisotropy by modelling bulk elastic properties to calculate seismic velocities for polymineralic evaporites using a rock recipe approach. Predictions from the rock recipe approach include that an increasing modal anhydrite grain proportion contributes to a significantly higher seismic anisotropy in halite-dominated mixed rock salt, and to a lesser extent in gypsum-dominated aggregates. In the latter case, the seismic anisotropy decreases until a specific threshold proportion is reached, where anisotropy increases again. CPO was assumed to be the most important factor for bulk seismic properties. However, a difference between rock recipe-based anisotropy due to CPO and ultrasonic wave velocity measurements was attributed to SPO and grain boundary effects (Vargas-Meleza et al.*,* 2015).

4.2 Approach and methods

4.2.1 Sample material

Natural evaporite samples from three different sites are used: i) hand samples from Boulby mine, Loftus, Saltburn-by-the-Sea, North Yorkshire, England, UK, ii) core samples from offshore sites in the North Sea and iii) outcrop samples from the Òdena quarry, Catalan Potash Basin (South Pyrenean foreland basin, Spain). These samples contain most of the common rock salt minerals, including halite, anhydrite, and anhydrite with gypsum content.

i) Four samples of Permian Zechstein rock salt from Boulby mine were selected to represent the variety of evaporitic minerals in rock salt deposits, a lack of discernible macroscopic scale anisotropic features such as lineations, SPO, or systematic phase distributions (e.g., banding). These samples comprise: pure halite from a 15 cm wide halite vein within polyhalite (BH2-2); halite with minor silt (BH5-1); pure polyhalite (PB1-2); and potash (Ba7-2; Fig. 4.2).

The vein halite in BH2-2 is colourless to white with blocky crystals and a grain size on centimetre scale. The same sample was cut parallel to the vein margin, and the polyhalite vein rims were trimmed off. No SPO is visible from a macroscopic scale. The halite in BH5-1 is transparent to white, with a slight champagne (yellowish) tint, and silt is mid-grey. There is no indication of the orientation of this sample relative to any fabric. The grain size of the halite is smaller than in BH2-2, on a millimetre to centimetre scale.

Figure 4.2: Cleavage of the material blocks from Boulby mine, UK, later cut into cuboids. a) Pure halite vein in polyhalite, b) Halite mixed with silt, c) pure polyhalite with conchoidal fracturing, and d) potash with carnallite (red), sylvite (white), and halite (transparent).

Polyhalite in BP1-2 is mid-grey and massive, with conchoidal fracturing, the block was picked without indication of any orientation relative to a fabric. Individual crystals are not discernible on a macroscale.

Potash in (Ba7-2) is typical of that in Boulby mine, predominantly comprised of halite and sylvite with a minor silt/clay content and some minor carnallite. There was no indication for orientation relative to a fabric. However, the sample is enriched in carnallite, and the KCl content is likely to be approximately 30 to 35 %, according to Boulby Mine specialists (Welsh, pers. comm., 24th of February 2020).

ii) Nine samples from three different sections of a drill core of late Permian Zechstein Formation anhydrite from the margin of the West Central Graben in North Sea are used (Fig. 4.3; Appendix C, Fig. C.1).

The material was taken from well 21/16-4 (surface latitude: 57° 25' 05.76'' N; TD latitude: 57° 25' 05.49'' N; surface longitude: 00° 07' 41.69'' E; TD longitude: 00° 07' 41.28'' E; completed January 1996; Amerada Hess Limited) at true vertical depths below sea level between 7241 and 7355 ft. (2207 to 2242 m). Samples were selected for high degrees of mineralogical purity and textural homogeneity.

Three sample intervals include the upper, middle, and lower units of the Zechstein Formation represented in the drill core, and include a range of macroscale fabrics such as: bands of white and pink massive anhydrite, several cm to dm thick; and white or light grey irregular nodules with centimetre scale diameter in a diffuse to distinct mid grey to brown thin clay membrane/film network, commonly called 'chicken-wire' texture (Warren, 2016; Fig. 4.3; Appendix C, Fig. C.1 to C.4).

iii) Six samples (AA-3, BA-4, 5, 6, 7, 9) were collected from an anhydrite-dominated outcrop of the Òdena Gypsum Formation (Upper Eocene), located at the margin of the Catalan Potash Basin in the South Pyrenean foreland basin, around the village of Òdena in Catalonia, Spain (Fig. 4.4; Appendix C, Fig. C.5).

All samples are beige, with light brown clay or mud inclusions. Clusters of microscopic fibro-radiate crystals of anhydrite define spherulitic features in the millimetre range in diameter, which comprises between 25 and 40 % of the rock.

Backscattered electron image analysis shows that a minor amount of gypsum is located between anhydrite blades of the spherulites in veins and along grain boundaries (Appendix C, Fig. C.6 and C.7).

Figure 4.3: Overview of North Sea anhydrite samples, including cuts from the original drill core, twin sample cores drilled parallel to each other from the cuts of the original core cuts, and plane polarized light images (Zeiss Axio optical microscope) of thin sections from one of the cores in the central column.

Figure 4.4: Òdena anhydrite with gypsum samples. a) Three cores cut randomly from outcrop blocks, b) plane polarized light image of the sample material (clay inclusions darken areas with gypsum veins) and c) backscattered electron image.

4.2.2 Sample preparation

All four samples from Boulby mine and one from North Sea (N2-1) were cut with a rock saw into cuboids with face dimensions ranging from 27 to 82 mm. The size of the cuboids differs due to grain size and dimensions of the available sample. Cutting and grinding were done dry, due to the high solubility of the constituent minerals in water. The material from North Sea and Òdena quarry is less reactive with water and was cut using a rock saw with water as coolant/lubricant and then immediately put in a drying

oven for 2 hours at ~ 65 °C. The cuboid facets were then mechanically polished to yield planar surfaces to facilitate ultrasonic wave velocity measurements.

For each sample, the dimensions were measured (mean of ten calliper readings), and weight was measured with a standard micro scale, yielding volume and density for each sample (Table 4.1). The error of the volume was calculated as the difference between the volume calculated with mean lengths (X, Y and Z, directions assigned arbitrarily) and the volume calculated with the sum of mean lengths plus the standard deviation of the respective ten measurements of X, Y and Z lengths. The sum of volume and error of volume is used to calculate the error of the density.

Table 4.1: Sample characteristics, including mean dimensions (*lx,y,z***) of the cuboids and the diameter** *d* **of the cores, calculated volume** (V) **, mass** (M) **, and density** (ρ) **. hal = halite; potash* = halite, sylvite, carnallite, and silt; anh = anhydrite; gyp = gypsum.**

		Sample Content	l_X [mm]	l_{v} [mm]	l_z [mm]	d [mm]	V [cm ³]	M[g]	ρ [gcm ⁻³]
\ddot{a}	BH2-2	hal		81.56 ± 0.23 60.70 ± 0.14	58.70 ± 0.41	\blacksquare	290.58 ± 3.54	617.12	2.124 ± 0.026
	BH5-1	hal, silt		44.61 ± 0.26 61.98 ± 0.14 60.77 ± 0.20			168.01 ± 1.91	353.08	2.102 ± 0.024
	BP1-2	polyhal		53.13 ± 0.21 48.18 ± 0.21	48.21 ± 0.20	$\overline{}$	123.40 ± 1.56	339.02	2.747 ± 0.034
	Ba7-2	potash*		59.15 ± 0.15 27.72 ± 0.03	32.96 ± 0.11	÷,	54.04 ± 0.38	111.24	2.058 ± 0.014
	$\overline{11}$) $N2-1$	anh		37.89 ± 0.30 64.18 ± 0.07	49.80 ± 0.15	$\overline{}$	121.12 ± 1.43	353.68	2.920 ± 0.034
	$N2-1.1$	anh	61.81 ± 0.03			25.41 ± 0.05	31.34 ± 0.15	92.24	2.943 ± 0.014
	$N2-1.2$	anh	62.00 ± 0.03		۰	25.35 ± 0.03	31.30 ± 0.08	92.10	2.942 ± 0.007
	$N2-2.2$	anh	61.99 ± 0.05		$\overline{}$	25.41 ± 0.04	31.44 ± 0.12	92.51	2.943 ± 0.011
	$N4-1.2$	anh	62.03 ± 0.05		$\overline{}$	25.41 ± 0.03	31.45 ± 0.10	91.94	2.924 ± 0.009
	$N4-3.1$	anh	61.87 ± 0.09		$\frac{1}{2}$	25.33 ± 0.10	31.17 ± 0.30	91.47	2.935 ± 0.027
	$N5-1.1$	anh	61.90 ± 0.04		$\overline{}$	25.41 ± 0.04	31.38 ± 0.11	92.32	2.942 ± 0.010
	$N5-1.2$	anh	62.02 ± 0.08		$\overline{}$	25.45 ± 0.01	31.55 ± 0.07	93.05	2.950 ± 0.066
	$N5-4.2$	anh	62.04 ± 0.04		$\overline{}$	25.42 ± 0.04	31.47 ± 0.11	92.61	2.943 ± 0.011
	$N5-5.1$	anh	62.04 ± 0.02		$\overline{}$	25.43 ± 0.04	31.51 ± 0.11	92.62	2.939 ± 0.010
	\overline{iii}) BA-6	anh, gyp	61.80 ± 0.26		$\overline{}$	25.44 ± 0.01	31.41 ± 0.15	88.14	2.806 ± 0.013
	BA-7	anh, gyp	62.07 ± 0.08		٠	25.43 ± 0.02	31.53 ± 0.09	87.00	2.760 ± 0.008
	$BA-9$	anh, gyp	61.85 ± 0.09		$\overline{}$	25.38 ± 0.08	31.28 ± 0.24	87.65	2.802 ± 0.021

Core plugs with a length $(X \text{ axis})$ of 60 mm and a diameter of 25 mm (Y, Z) dimension) were drilled out of sample blocks (Òdena quarry samples) and core material (North Sea samples). Given that the spherulitic Òdena quarry anhydrite does not display any kind of preferred orientation fabric and is derived from an outcrop, cores were drilled in arbitrary orientations, approximately perpendicular to bedding.
Multiple adjacent cores of the coarse crystalline Zechstein anhydrite were drilled normal to the bedding, and thus bedding is perpendicular to X and parallel to Y, Z.

Core plugs were drilled in the presence of water and were air-dried for 24 hours immediately afterward to mitigate any potential alteration effects. The Òdena quarry cores were cut at the University of Barcelona and North Sea sample at the University of Aberdeen.

4.2.3 Ultrasonic wave velocity measurements

Ultrasonic wave velocity measurements were performed using the same methods and equipment described in Vargas-Meleza et al. (2015) for cuboid and core samples described previously. In the case of the cuboids, wave velocity was measured along the three principal orthogonal X-Y-Z directions to assess the grain scale effects contributing to the total anisotropy (Fig. 4.5a).

Figure 4.5: Ultrasonic velocity measurement directions and setup for cuboids and cores.

For core samples, the ultrasonic velocity was measured along the long axis (X; Fig. 4.5b), and in alternating directions (core was rotated about 180° and remeasured).

The instrumental setup is comprised of a pulse generator-receiver unit, four piezoelectric transducers (two pairs of one emitter and one receiver each). The transducers have a 2.54 cm diameter and cover up to 1 MHz oscillation frequency. The final instrument is a digital oscilloscope.

For the Panametrics V103 type compressional-wave device, the polarisation is in the direction of the emitted signal, i.e., normal to the face. For the Panametrics V153 shear-wave device, the polarisation is parallel to the transducer face and aligned with the junction of the cable meeting the housing.

Bench-top velocity measurements were taken under ambient laboratory conditions (atmospheric pressure (*atm*) and room temperature (*RT*). Two sets of measurements were made: one dry and one with silicone lubricant gel applied to increase contact signal strength. For the cuboids, a 350 g weight was added (top of top transducer) to stabilize the contact between transducers and cuboid. The cores were fastened in a steel holder, where the transducers were mounted in previously.

The wave velocity-based procedure applied to rocks is based on the ultrasonic pulse transmission method of Birch (1960). Birch's (1960) method uses the first-arrival travel time of an acoustic signal after propagation through a medium. The procedure used for this study includes placing a rock sample between two transducers (one emitter and one receiver). A pulse generator initiates an electrical signal, which is sent through the sample to the emitter (oscillated at 1 kHz frequency). The velocity of propagation for different types of waves (P-waves and S-waves) is calculated by linear regression of the relation $v = l/t$ (Vargas-Meleza et al., 2015). The transit time of the transmitted signal *t* and the distance it travelled through, i.e., the length *l* of the sample are measured (Vargas-Meleza et al.*,* 2015).

A cuboid of pure aluminium (solid) with a standard V_P of 6.35 km s⁻¹ and V_S of 3.12 km s^{-1} was used for calibration of the ultrasonic velocity measurements (Song et al., 2004). Samples were measured after a standard deviation of 0.1 % after five consecutive measurements of the aluminium block complete the calibration.

The P-wave velocities of the cuboids are measured by first measuring along one direction from one side and then rotating the cuboid 180° and sending the wave through from the other side. This is repeated three times, resulting in a total of 6 transit time measurements along each principal (orthogonal) direction. Thus, the results of *VP* measurement for a single cuboid include 18 single transit time measurements. The average of each set of six transit times was calculated. The standard deviation is in the range of 0.0274 to 0.4215 µs. The number of measurements was reduced from six to four for *VP* measurements on the cores and lubricating gel was used for the core measurements. *Vs* is also measured only four times (two from each side of the cuboid/core). Different from the V_P measurements, the transducers were rotated 90° on the surface of the sample. XY means the wave propagated in X direction through the sample and a linear marker on the transducer is oriented perpendicular to Y (and parallel to Z). Then the transducer was rotated 90° and the measurement is conducted in X and perpendicular to Z (XZ).

Quantification of velocity variations, the coefficient of anisotropy, is the fractional difference between the maximum and the minimum velocities in different directions in percent (Sheriff, 2002) and commonly calculated using the following two equations:

$$
AV_P = 200 \ ((V_P, max - V_P, min) / (V_P, max + V_P, min))
$$
 [1]

$$
AV_S = 200 ((V_{S1}, max - V_{S2}, min)/(V_{S1}, max + V_{S2}, min))
$$
 [2]

The coefficient of anisotropy is a measure of the ultrasonic velocity anisotropy for Pwave (*AV_P*) and S-wave (*AV_S*) anisotropy, respectively. The calculation of directional ultrasonic wave anisotropy for this study is limited to the three principal orthogonal directions (X, Y, and Z). After Lloyd and Kendall (2005), the full determination of azimuthal anisotropy requires velocity measurement in a minimum of five directions, which limits the results of this study.

4.2.4 Microstructural characterisation (EBSD)

4.2.4.1 Sample preparation

Thin sections were made for North Sea samples and Òdena quarry samples only. For the North sea samples, surplus material sourced from directly adjacent to the core plugs was used to prepare polished thin sections in the core plug reference frame parallel to the long axis of the cores (i.e., the $X-(Y, Z)$ plane) or perpendicular to it (i.e., the $Y-Z$ plane) to characterise the samples. Thin sections with the same specifications of the Òdena quarry samples were prepared using additional cores (i.e., BA-4), as no other material was available. All thin sections were prepared for scanning electron microscopy (SEM) with alumina in glycol, followed by a final polish with 0.6 μ m colloidal silica in glycol using a Buehler Vibromet II polisher for 2 to 4 hours. An evaporative carbon coating was applied to mitigate charging during SEM.

4.2.4.2 Imaging

Optical microscopy images of full thin sections were collected in reflected and transmitted light, with a plane and crossed polarizers using a Zeiss Axio Imager microscope with an automated stage at Curtin University. Scanning electron microscopy was done using the facilities at the John de Laeter Centre at Curtin University and the University of Aberdeen.

Backscattered electron (BSE) imaging and point energy dispersive X-ray (EDX) analysis was conducted at University of Aberdeen with a Zeiss Gemini MA10 scanning electron microscope (SEM) fitted with an Oxford Instruments INCA X-ray microanalysis system. At Curtin University, a Tescan MIRA3 field emission scanning electron microscope (FE-SEM) with an Oxford instruments AZtec combined EDX and electron backscatter diffraction (EBSD) acquisition system, including a Symmetry EBSD detector and XMax 20 mm SDD EDX detector, to quantify phases and crystallographic microstructures. Secondary electron (SE) and BSE images were acquired, and EBSD maps with step sizes ranging from 2 to 20 µm were collected. Data acquisition and processing settings as well as processing procedures (Table 4.2) followed those of Vargas-Meleza et al. (2015) and Timms et al*.* (2017; 2019).

SEM					
	Make/model			Tescan MIRA3 FE-SEM	
	EBSD acquisition system			Oxford Instruments AZtec/Symmetry EBSD	
				Detector	
	EDX acquisition system			Oxford Instruments AZtec/XMax 20 mm SDD	
	EBSD processing software			Oxford Instruments Channel 5.12.72.0	
	Acceleration voltage (kV)			20	
	Working distance (mm)			18.5	
	Tilt			70°	
EBSD match units					
	Phase	Space group	β (°)		
	Anhydrite	Cmcm		Hawthorne and Ferguson, 1975	
	Gypsum	C2/c	114.3	Schonfield et al., 1996; Boeyens and Ichhram,	
				2002; Hildyard et al., 2009	
EBSP acquisition, indexing and processing					
	EBSP acquisition speed (Hz)		40	Band detection (min/max)	6/8
	EBSP Background (frames)		64	Mean angular deviation (all	$< 1^{\circ}$
				phases)	
	EBSP Binning		4×4	Wild spike correction	yes
	EBSP Grain		high	Nearest neighbour zero solution extrapolation	6
	Hough resolution		60		

Table 4.2: Scanning electron microscopy settings and electron backscatter diffraction acquisition and processing parameters.

Match units for indexing EBSD patterns of anhydrite and gypsum were developed from crystallographic data of Boeyens and Ichhram (2002) and Hawthorne and Ferguson (1975), after Hildyard et al. (2009) and Vargas-Meleza et al. (2015) (Table 4.2).

Oxford instruments Channel 5.12.72.0 (release date 26/9/2017) Tango software was used for processing and displaying EBSD data as thematic EBSD maps and pole figures, as well as data on grain shape, size, and orientation, respectively. Beforehand, isolated, erroneous EBSD data points were removed using a 'wildspike' correction, and a zero solution extrapolation to 6 nearest neighbours was applied routinely. The grain detection algorithm in Tango used a 10° neighbour misorientation threshold. Some large area maps contain minor artefacts from stitching together multiple panels with subtle angular mismatches at the edges.

Anhydrite was processed to eliminate systematic misindexing, which was present in some anhydrite grains and manifest as two or more randomly distributed indexed orientations, giving the grains a speckled appearance. Misindexing occurred as distinctive and consistent misorientation angle/axis relationships, commonly with multiple symmetric equivalent misorientations (Appendix C, Table C.1).

Maps were corrected for a total of 67 misorientation angle/axis relationships present in misindexed grains (for a full list see Appendix C), which did not include the known twin relationship in anhydrite. Low-angle $(2 \text{ to } 10^{\circ})$, high-angle $(> 10^{\circ})$, and twin $(83.5^{\circ} / \{100\})$ boundaries were visualised in anhydrite EBSD maps.

Grains were fitted with ellipses using the algorithm in Tango, which were used to generate maps and graphs of grain size (using the length of the long axis of the fitted ellipse grain size parameter) and grain aspect ratios. Angular stitching artefacts in large area maps do not significantly affect grain statistics and were ignored. A combination of BSE images and EBSD mapping were used to manually trace the networks of grain boundaries, fractures, and pores network using Adobe Illustrator, resulting in vector graphics maps of the phase distribution of anhydrite, gypsum, dolomite, and pores where appropriate. Additionally, grains were fitted with ellipses using ImageJ, and grain size distributions were calculated.

4.2.4.3 Crystallographic preferred orientation (CPO) quantification

CPOs were visualised as pole figures of low-index planes for each indexed phase present in the samples using EBSD map data using the Mambo software in Channel 5.12 and displayed as lower hemisphere plots in the maps X-Y-Z reference frame. All data for each phase were used to generate contoured plots using Mambo. The statistical description of the intensity of the fabric based on clustering of poles on pole figures, known as the 'multiple of uniform density' (m.u.d.).

As an additional quantitative measure of fabric strength the M-index (Skemer et al., 2005) was used as a measure of phase specific CPO strength. The *M*-index is based on the distribution of uncorrelated misorientation angles, and scaled from $M = 0$, representing a random fabric, and $M = 1$, representing a single crystal. *M*-index is known to correlate well with seismic anisotropy (e.g., Skemer et al., 2005; Jung et al., 2010; Michibayashi et al., 2012).

4.3.4.4 Shape preferred orientation (SPO) quantification

EBSD data is analysed for SPO quantification and the results are compared to additional SPO quantification from BSE and EBSD map-based manual grain boundary trace maps. Vector graphic maps were created via manual tracing of combined BSE and EBSD maps include interpretation of the grain boundary pattern, phase distribution of anhydrite, gypsum, dolomite, fractures, and pores, appropriate to the sample characteristics. SPO quantification of four North Sea samples was accomplished using the following four methods/techniques:

A. Maps and rose diagrams using the long axis of the fitted ellipse of grains detected via Tango in Channel software. Maps are of grain orientations using the orientation of the long axis of the fitted ellipse.

B. Rose diagrams plot the orientation of the long axis of fitted ellipses of all grains detected using data from ImageJ analysis of manually traced grain boundary maps.

C. Grain boundary segment orientation rose diagrams were generated from grain boundary traces via GBPaQ, which is automated for such plots. This means that all linear segments (vectors) that describe the grain boundary pattern are statistically analysed and the magnitude is plotted against the orientation of the grain boundary segment (length-weighted).

D. Grain boundary segment intercept (GBSI)-based analysis via GBPaQ. One central radial scan line centre is superimposed on top of the grain boundary pattern. The angle between scan lines is 0.5°. GBSI density per pixel for all scan line orientations is calculated and the minimum orientation and density, maximum orientation and density, and average GBSI density are determined. Minimum intensity (*Imin*) is determined for each sample, calculated by dividing the minimum GBSI density by the average GBSI density.

The Òdena quarry anhydrite with gypsum samples has an inhomogeneous structure, including spherulites and sections with blocky anhydrite crystals. An exemplary spherulitic structure is interpreted via manual tracing and processed analytically using the following two methods:

A. Greyscale threshold-based phase content analysis (ImageJ) of BSE images, where the area of defined individual greyscale phase thresholds is used to calculate the percentage relative to the total area of the map.

B. Fracture geometry quantification performed with the MATLABTM toolbox FracPaQ (Healy et al.*,* 2017) for gypsum-filled veins and intra-grain fractures on manually traced linear segments from BSE images and EBSD maps.

Further grain boundary segment-based analysis and GBSI analysis are not done because the spherulitic section only represents a partial pattern characteristic that makes up \sim 40 % of the complete sample (Fig. 4.5b). Phase distribution and fracture distribution are more representative, concluding from backscatter images of the Òdena quarry samples (Fig. 4.5c).

4.3 Results

4.3.1 Ultrasonic wave velocity measurements

P-wave velocities (*VP*) of the cuboids show that the three samples BH2-2, BP1-2, Ba7- 2 with the least difference of V_P between principal directions (V_P X, V_P Y, and V_P Z) plot in a very close range of literature velocities from Jones and Davison (2014) (Table 4.3). Calculation of the P-wave anisotropy *AVP* shows that BH2-2 (pure halite), BP1- 2 (pure polyhalite), and Ba7-2 (potash with halite) have very little ultrasonic anisotropy under 5 % (Fig. 4.6a; Table 4.3).

Figure 4.6: Results of ultrasonic velocity measurements for V_P **and** V_S **from all samples** in this study. Ranges in V_P and V_S for single crystals, shown as coloured bars, are **calculated from single crystal ultrasonic velocity anisotropy for halite, anhydrite, and gypsum via AnisoVis MATLABTM Toolbox (Healy et al.***,* **2020) (chapter 1, Fig. 1.1).** *VP* **ranges were also published by Vargas-Meleza et al. (2015). For c), and d) the measurements of one material (North Sea or Òdena quarry) are combined to calculate** AV_P and AV_S **.** d) The difference between V_S **X** and V_S **X**' is that the emitter is rotated 90° **on the surface for measurement of shear wave splitting.**

Of the two remaining samples, BH5-1 (halite mixed with clay) has the highest AV_P with 60 %. The cuboid of the North Sea anhydrite, N2-1, shows the most difference from the literature P-wave velocity (Jones and Davison, 2014) but has one of the smallest *AV_P* with 1 %. In comparison to single crystal *AV_P* ranges of halite, gypsum, and anhydrite from Vargas-Meleza et al. (2015), the cuboids have generally slower velocities. Only BH2-2 and N2-1 are within the slower end of the ranges of single crystal P-wave velocities.

Table 4.3: Literature data and results of this study on density [g cm-3] and compressional wave velocity V_P [m s⁻¹] in directions **X**, **Y** and **Z**; ΔV_P - range of V_P , and anisotropy ΔV_P **[%], calculated by equation 1. [1] Official mineral density (e.g., Mineralogy Database webmineral.com); [2] wireline log rock densities after Urai et al. (2008); [3] after Jones** and Davison (2014). *calculation excluding N4-1.2, without this the V_P X range is 5,229 τ **to 5,663 m** s^{-1} and range is 434 **m** s^{-1} .

The results from analysing S-wave velocities of the cuboids confirm that BH2-2 and BH5-1 have very different ultrasonic characteristics (Fig. 4.6b; Table 4.4). The halite and clay mixture (BH5-1) has slower P- and S-wave velocities compared to the pure halite (BH2-2) sample. The shear wave anisotropy is doubled for BH5-1 (34 %) compared to BH2-2 (15 %), but overall lower than the respective *AVP*.

All samples except BH5-1 have higher AV_S than AV_P . Especially pure polyhalite (BP1-2) and pure anhydrite (N2-1), which had the lowest AV_S under 1 % have relatively strong AV_P with 20 $\%$ and 29 $\%$.

Table 4.4: S-wave velocities V_S **[m** s^{-1} **] for all samples. *no silicone lubricant gel used.** ΔV_S **is the shear wave splitting, the difference between fastest and slowest shear wave velocity** from the mean values presented in this table. AV_S is the velocity anisotropy of the S**waves [%], calculated from the mean values presented in this table using equation 2.**

In contrast to the cuboid samples, core samples allow ultrasonic wave velocity only in one principal direction (X), due to sample shape and the size of the transducers. Also, various samples of the same rock type, either pure anhydrite (N samples; North Sea) or a mixture of anhydrite with gypsum (BA samples; Òdena quarry) are measured and V_P and V_S values combined to get material dependent anisotropy (AV_P and AV_S).

P-wave velocities of North Sea anhydrite samples are very slow for anhydrite (Fig. 4.6c); Table 4.3). They are way below the velocities of Jones and Davison (2014) and at the lower boundary of single crystal *AVP* (values from Vargas-Meleza et al.*,* 2015).

One sample, N4-1.2, has distinctively slow *VP*. With the N4-1.2 minimum P-wave velocity values, AV_P is at 18 %. Without the N4-1.2 values, AV_P is considerately lower with 8 % (Table 4.3). V_P velocities of the three Odena quarry samples are within 2 % *AV_P* and also distinctively slower than the literature anhydrite and gypsum velocities (Jones and Davison, 2014).

Compared to single crystal P-wave anisotropy (Vargas-Meleza et al., 2015), the Òdena quarry samples, that contain anhydrite and gypsum, plot at the very slow end of the anisotropy range for gypsum.

The S-wave velocities of the pure anhydrite core samples (North Sea) are generally faster than those of the anhydrite and gypsum mixed samples (Òdena; Fig. 4.6d; Table 4.4). Shear wave splitting (ΔV_s ; the difference between V_s X and V_s X') is < 50 m s⁻¹ for six (N2-1.1, N2-1.2, N2-2.2, N4-3.1, N5-4.2, N5-5.1) out of nine North Sea anhydrite samples and therefore in the same range as the shear wave splitting of the Òdena quarry samples that is ≤ 60 m s⁻¹. N4-1.2, N5-1.1, and N5-1.2 have stronger shear wave splitting in the range of 168 to 225 m s^{-1} .

AVS measured for the cores has not changed much from *AVP* for both sample materials. It is constant at 2 % for the Òdena quarry samples and slightly lower with 14 % for the North Sea samples.

4.3.2 Microstructural characterisation

The study of microstructures for assessment of systematic features that might cause or influence ultrasonic anisotropy is limited to North Sea samples and Òdena quarry samples.

4.3.2.1 North Sea anhydrite samples

Four examples of EBSD analytical datasets of sample material from four different core sections of North Sea anhydrite were analysed, three from thin sections with orientation perpendicular to the long axis of the core $(X; N2-1T, N3-1T, and N4-2T)$ and one from a thin section cut parallel to the core long axis (N4-1II).

Crystallographic orientation maps of these four samples generally show spatial clusters of grains with different preferred crystallographic orientations (blue, green clusters, and pink and violet clusters, Fig. 4.7a and 4.8a; Appendix C, Fig. C.8a and C.13a).

Low-angle boundaries (2-10° misorientation) are more common in grains with smaller grain size compared to large grains, which can be free of such low angle boundaries. No twin boundaries ([100] by 83.5°) were detected. The grain size (Fig. 4.7b and 4.8b) is dominated by medium to small grain sizes, often as clusters of grains with similar grain sizes.

Figure 4.7: Microstructural analysis of sample N3-1T, on a thin section with perpendicular orientation to X direction (long core axis). a) Crystallographic orientation map (Euler), with i) including low angle boundaries > 2° in yellow and grain boundaries (> 10°) in black (full map and additional data in Appendix C, Fig. C.11, C.12), b) grain size map, c) grain shape map, d) grain shape preferred orientation map. Slope means orientation of the long axis of the fitted ellipse of grains. a) to d) are based on EBSD analysis. e) Grain boundary trace map, based on manual tracing of BSE and crystallographic orientation map of the same area. *S* **is the number of grain boundary trace segments of the data set. f) Grain boundary segment orientation map, based on e) and analysed via GBPaQ.**

The grain shape maps contain few grains with a medium axial ratio. There seems to be a relation between the axial ratio and azimuth of the grains. Elongated grains are often subparallel or perpendicular to each other.

SPO maps categorise grains by the angle of the longest axis of a fitted ellipse, showing domains that are dominated by certain angles (Fig. 4.7d, 4.8d, Appendix C, Fig. C.8d, C.13d). For example, the lower part of the SPO map of sample N2-1T (Appendix C, and C.8d) is dominated by angles around 45° and 135°, with a successive increase of grains with 0/180° orientation towards the top of the map.

The grain boundary trace map (Fig. 4.7e) includes data that has not been indexed via EBSD. The interpretation from combined EBSD and BSE image analysis includes a great number of grains with a considerable smaller grain size.

Large, lath shaped anhydrite grains have slightly lobate grain boundaries, and are predominantly oriented subparallel or perpendicular to one another (Fig. 4.7e,f and Fig. 4.8e,f; Appendix C, Fig. C.8e,f, and C.13e,f). Grain boundary segment orientation maps (Fig. 4.7f, and 4.8f, Appendix C, Fig. C.8f, and C.13f) show a dominance of segment orientations around 45° and 135° (pink and green colour).

Figure 4.8: Microstructural analysis of sample N4-2T, on a thin section with perpendicular orientation to X direction (long core axis). a) Crystallographic orientation map, with i) including low angle boundaries > 2° in yellow and grain boundaries (> 10°) in black (full map in Appendix C, Fig. C.16), b) grain size map, c) grain shape map, d) shape preferred orientation map. a) to d) are based on EBSD analysis. e) Grain boundary trace map, based on manual tracing of BSE and crystallographic orientation map. *S* **is the number of trace segments of the map. f) Grain boundary segment orientation map, based on e) and analysed via GBPaQ.**

Crystallographic orientation pole figures (Fig. 4.9a, 4.10a; Appendix C, Fig. C.9a, C.14a) of the indexed anhydrite of the EBSD datasets presented show clustering of poles with maximum m.u.d. ranging from 5.50 (N3-1T, Fig. 4.9a) to 4.15 (N4-2II, Fig. 4.10a).

Results of fitted ellipse long axis orientation rose plots of EBSD data and trace maps (Fig. 4.9bii and cii, Fig. 4.10bii and cii; Appendix C., Fig. C.9bii and cii, C.4bii and cii) are consistent with orientations, and with only slight differences in magnitudes for all four datasets. For example, the mean orientation of sample N3-1T are consistent with orientations of 88 \degree and 89 \degree , while the maximum magnitude differs by 1% (8.1% and 7.1 %; Fig. 4.9bii and cii). However, the trace map-based roses of all datasets (i.e., Fig. 4.9cii) show that there are various strong secondary orientations, ranging within \sim 90 \degree from another. (Fig. 4.9cii; Appendix C, Fig. C.9cii and C.14cii).

The segment orientation rose plots (Fig. 4.9d, 4.10d, Appendix C, Fig. C.9d, C.14d) have a distinctive rectangular shape, confirming previous results of a bimodal SPO. The primary and secondary maximum bins are of very similar magnitude and oriented perpendicular to each other.

The shapes of the GBSI density roses (Fig. 4.9e, 4.10e; Appendix C, Fig. C.9e, C.14e) range from almost round (N3-1T, Fig. 4.9e), to showing square (N4-2II, Fig. 4.10e, and N4-1T, Appendix C, Fig. C.14e) or rhombic geometry (N2-1T, Appendix C, Fig. C.9e). While a circular shape strongly indicates weak to no SPO, square and rhombic shapes display bimodal SPO, which is in agreement with results of segment orientation rose plots.

Figure 4.9: Crystallographic and shape preferred orientation analysis of sample N3-1T, based on the maps shown in Figure 4.7. a) Crystallographic orientation pole figures for anhydrite based on EBSD data. b) Fitted ellipse analysis of EBSD data, i) grain size histogram and ii) rose diagram of the long axes angles of fitted ellipses. c) Fitted ellipse analysis of trace map data (48,656 segments), i) grain size histogram and ii) rose diagram of the long axes angles of fitted ellipses. d) Equal area, length-weighted grain boundary segment orientation rose of the trace map, resulting from GBPaQ analysis. e) GBSI density rose plot from GBPaQ analysis. The angle between scan lines = 0.5° . α is the **minimum GBSI density (scan line) angle.** γ is the maximum GBSI density (scan line) angle. $\overline{x}N(\theta)$ is the average GBSI density, in GBSI per pixel.

Figure 4.10: Crystallographic and shape preferred orientation analysis of sample N4-2T, based on the maps shown in Figure 4.8. a) Crystallographic orientation pole figures for anhydrite based on EBSD data. b) Fitted ellipse analysis of EBSD data, i) grain size histogram and ii) rose diagram of the long axes angles of fitted ellipses. c) Fitted ellipse analysis of trace map data (39,053 segments), i) grain size histogram and ii) rose diagram of the long axes angles of fitted ellipses. d) Equal area, length-weighted grain boundary segment orientation rose of the trace map, resulting from GBPaQ analysis. e) GBSI density rose plot from GBPaQ analysis. The angle between scan lines is 0.5°. *α* **is the minimum GBSI density (scan line) angle.** *ɣ* **is the maximum GBSI density (scan line)** angle. $\overline{x}N(\theta)$ is the average GBSI density, in GBSI per pixel.

The results from EBSD data and grain boundary tracing of microstructural analysis of the North Sea anhydrite samples are summarised in table 4.5. In general, the number of grains analysed rises significantly due to grain boundary tracing, whereas the grain size is generally smaller and the axial ratio is slightly higher. Mean resultant directions and approximate 95 % confidence intervals, both measures of SPO strength and orientation, are very similar between the analytical methods.

Table 4.5: Microstructural analysis from EBSD data and grain boundary tracing. # = number of grains; ECD = mean equivalent circular diameter \pm **standard deviation;** $r =$ **mean axial ratio of longest axis/ shortest axis of fitted grain ellipses ± standard deviation; MRD = mean resultant direction ± approx. 95 % confidence interval.**

The mean grain size equivalent circular diameter (ECD) analysed parallel to the long axis of the cores (N4-1II) is 89.71 ± 57.32 µm (EBSD statistics)/ 79.62 ± 59.30 µm (trace map statistics), and therefore bigger than the mean grain sizes measured perpendicular to that axis (N4-2T), with $69.41 \pm 35.32 \,\mu m$ (EBSD statistics)/ 49.01 ± 37.08 µm (trace map statistics).

The maximum grain size determined via EBSD grain size statistics (i.e., Fig. 4.7b) is between 430 μ m and 493 μ m. The mean ECD resulting from the analysis of N2-1T is about half as big as that of every other map, with a visibly larger population of small grains (i.e., Fig. 4.7e; Appendix C, Fig. C.8;). The mean axial ratio *r* is lowest for N3- 1T with $1.71.70 \pm 0.69$ (EBSD statistics)/ 2.08 ± 0.94 (trace map statistics) but very consistent over the other data sets, where it ranges between 2.01 ± 0.82 (N2-1T, EBSD statistics) and 2.35 ± 1.29 (N2-1T, trace map statistics).

GBSI density analysis results are used to calculate the minimum intensity (Table 4.6), a value that quantifies the strength of the SPO. The minimum intensity is highest for N4-2T and lowest for N2-1T. SPO is generally weaker in the N4-2T grain boundary map, and N2-1T has the strongest SPO out of the analysed North Sea samples.

CPO is strongest in N2-1 with $M = 0.15$ (m.u.d. of 5.36), followed by N3-1T with M $= 0.14$ (m.u.d. of 5.5) and N4-1II with $M = 0.13$ (m.u.d. of 4.89). N4-2T has the weakest CPO of the North Sea samples, with $M = 0.12$ (m.u.d. of 4.15).

Table 4.6: Grain boundary intercept based results and CPO strength based on *M***-index.** α = minimum GBSI density (scan line) angle; γ = maximum GBSI density (scan line) **angle;** $NL(a)$ = minimum GBSI density; $NL(y)$ = maximum GBSI density; $\bar{x}NL(\theta)$ = average GBSI density; I_{min} = minimum intensity. I/ppx = GBSIs per scan line. Additional **data for M-index can be found in Appendix C, Fig. C.19 and Table C.5.**

The minimum intensity can be plotted against the mean axial ratio *r* of EBSD and grain boundary tracing analysis. Figure 4.11 shows that all axial ratios are around $r = 2$, with variation of minimum intensity between ~ 0.79 and ~ 0.59 , possibly relating to initial elongate anhydrite grains.

Figure 4.11: North Sea anhydrite minimum intensities (*Imin***) plotted a) against axial ratio** *r***, calculated from EBSD and trace maps fitted ellipse statistics, b) against multiple of uniform density (m.u.d.), and c) against CPO strength in form of** *M***-index.**

4.3.2.2 Òdena quarry anhydrite with gypsum

Overall, indexing of the Òdena quarry samples via EBSD has been difficult due to polishing that resulted in gypsum loss and generation of surface topography. Over 30 % of the EBSD map of AA-4T was misindexed, and these data were disregarded. Nevertheless, observations from the correctly indexed points of the crystallographic orientation EBSD map (Fig. 4.12a) show that the spherulitic features comprise radial anhydrite 'blades' that have a systematic change of orientation over several crystals, i.e., with low-angle misorientations. Furthermore, there are clusters of grains with similar crystallographic orientations and clusters with more random orientations.

Low-angle misorientation boundaries (2° to 10°) are common in spherulitic and nonspherulitic anhydrite (Fig. 4.12ai). The low-angle boundaries in spherulitic anhydrite blades are mostly radial, following the radial distribution of the crystals. Twin boundaries (83.5° / [100]) were not detected.

The pole figures show a clustering of poles with a low maximum m.u.d. of 2.84. The map covers a large area that includes several spherulitic structures and more blocky areas. Despite the high rate of misindexing, the data collected should be representative for analysing CPO strength of the material. The *M*-index calculated from the anhydrite data set is $M = 0.12$, indicating low CPO, similar to N4-2II (Table 4.6; Appendix C, Fig. C.19, Table C.5).

Further analysis of the EBSD data for AA-4T shows that larger grains are also strongly elongated, high axial ratio grains and most often forming spherulites (Fig. 4.17a,b). The shape preferred orientation map (Fig. 4.17c) shows that SPO is very inhomogeneous. There are areas where grains have similar grain shape orientation, next to areas with different orientations being dominant. Overall, there seems to be no uniform SPO in the sample. This is consistent with the macroscopic observations.

Figure 4.12: Microstructural analysis of sample AA-4, on a thin section with perpendicular orientation to X direction (long core axis). a) Crystallographic orientation map, with i) including low angle boundaries > 2° in yellow and grain boundaries (> 10°) in black (full map in Appendix C, Fig. C.17), b) crystallographic orientation pole figures for anhydrite based on EBSD data.

Figure 4.13: Microstructural analysis of sample AA-4, same map as Figure 4.12; a) grain size map, b) grain shape map and c) shape preferred orientation map. All based on EBSD data.

Trace map analysis of Òdena quarry sample material that is representative for the sample characteristics is very time consuming due to the inhomogeneity of structures. Therefore, a single spherulitic structure is analysed (Fig. 4.14), as a representative for phase content and distribution of those features. The trace map of anhydrite grain boundaries (Fig. 4.14b) includes 3,217 single anhydrite grains (grains truncated by the image boundaries were not included) with a mean equivalent circular diameter (ECD) of 8.07 μ m and a standard deviation of \pm 7.91 μ m.

Figure 4.14: Analysis of a section in Òdena quarry anhydrite and gypsum sample BA-4II with a spherulitic feature and in an orientation parallel to X. a) BSE image with anhydrite in light grey. Gypsum was lost due to polishing but the former gypsum veins

are visible from topography in between anhydrite laths. b) Grain boundary trace map based on the BSE image in a). c) Interpretation of the BSE image includes phase, gypsum vein, and fracture distribution analysis.

The mean axial ratio *r* of the fitted ellipses is 2.80 ± 2.20 . The trace map shows how anhydrite blades are radially distributed around central domains that contain blocky anhydrite grains and gypsum as a matrix. The radial blades are segmented into several 'fans'. Elongated grains with an orientation parallel to X are very rare. There seem to be three main orientations of elongated grains: 140°, 30° to 60°, and, less dominant, 0° (perpendicular to X).

The grain boundary-fracture-vein map (Fig. 4.14c), which was generated by tracing microstructures of the BSE image at up to 1800 times magnification (Fig. 4.14a), shows that gypsum is present along both fractures and grain boundaries. However, it is not clear from the map alone whether there is any preferential orientation for gypsum-filled microstructures.

A greyscale threshold analysis was performed on a BSE image of a spherulite in order to quantify 2D phase distribution (Fig. 4.14, and 4.15). The results of three different threshold modifications show that the anhydrite content is between 84 % and 86 %. Gypsum content analysis shows between 10 % and 18 % gypsum and dolomite ranges between 2 and 3 %. Greyscale threshold-based analysis of the spherulitic trace map (Fig. 4.15a) from sample AA-4T results in 75 % anhydrite and 12 % gypsum content, with 11 % of the area taken up by grain boundary traces. Assuming that half of these traces are anhydrite and half gypsum, the phase content of anhydrite is at 80 % and that of gypsum at 17 %, which is well within the range of phase content found for the large BSE image greyscale threshold phase analysis (Fig. 4.4c; Appendix D, Fig. D.25 to D.28, and Table D.1).

Analysis of gypsum-filled veins and grain boundaries (Fig. 4.15c,d,e) from the trace map (Fig. 4.14c) via fracture segment angle and length analysis (FracPaQ) shows that there are two preferred orientations of gypsum filled veins and grain boundaries around 30° to 60° and 120° to 150° to the core Y-direction (Fig. 4.14d).

x

x

Figure 4.15: Quantification of phase content and gypsum vein and fracture distribution, based on the trace map interpretation of BA-4II, shown in Figure 4.14. a) Phase distribution for anhydrite, gypsum, dolomite, and pores (gaps). b) Results of phase content analysis via greyscale threshold using ImageJ toolbox. c) Distribution of gypsum filled veins and intra-granular fractures. d) Fracture segment orientation analysis for gypsum filled veins via length-weighted rose of fracture segment orientation using the

FracPaQ toolbox. Bin size is 5°. e) Length-weighted fracture orientation analysis of intragranular fractures in anhydrite grains with no gypsum infill, using the FracPaQ toolbox. Bin size is 5°. *S* **is the number of linear fracture segments (vectors) analysed.**

4.4 Discussion

4.4.1 Anisotropy and other variations in ultrasonic velocity

The ultrasonic velocity measurements on the five cuboid samples show velocity anisotropy for P- and S-waves. Exceptions are BP1-2 and N2-1 P-wave velocity anisotropy of only 0.1 % and 1 %. Pure halite (BH2-2), halite dominated (BH5-1), and pure anhydrite (N2-1) cuboids have lower P-wave velocities than expected from single crystal anisotropy data (Vargas-Meleza et al.*,* 2015) and established literature (Jones and Davison, 2014) for V_P of pure halite and anhydrite minerals. The P-wave anisotropy is low for nearly all samples $(0.1\%$ to 5%), except the halite with clay sample (BH5-1; 60 %). Because potash is a mixture but still has an AV_P of only 5 %, it is unlikely that the P-wave velocity anisotropy of BH5-1 of 60 % can be explained solely by mixed phase content. For the samples with V_P measured lower than that expected from single crystal velocities (BH2-2, BH5-1), other factors are required to contribute to low velocities, such as second phase content and distribution, grain size, CPO, fractures, and grain (boundary) shape preferred orientation.

In four out of five cases, the AV_S is higher than the AV_P . S-wave velocity is in all cases slower than P- wave velocity. The relation between the different samples is consistent for P- and S-wave velocities, the order from slowest to fastest is BH5-1, Ba7-2, BH2- 2, N2-1, and BP1-2. *AVP* of single crystal data is also always higher than that of this study, with exception of BH5-1.

The ultrasonic velocity of North Sea anhydrite is measured in three principal directions on one cuboid and along the long axis of nine core plugs oriented parallel to the main drill core, all within 28 m of one another. However, there is no obvious connection between ultrasonic velocity characteristics and sample depth (order: N2, N3; 15 m deeper N5; 6.5 m deeper N4). The measured V_P of the cuboid (N2-1) is at the high end of that measured on cores and has a very low AV_P (1 %). V_P of the cuboid N2-1 is in the range of V_P measured from the cores. AV_P calculated using maximum and minimum *V_P* of all North Sea anhydrite cores is at 18 % and thus, 18 times higher. This means that the samples must have varying characteristics, causing such inhomogeneity. For seismic averaging, this implies that the length scales of this heterogeneity are of importance. Especially as evaporites often form cyclical deposits. The *AV_S* of the cores in X direction (sub vertical true direction) is smaller (14 %), compared to that of the cuboid (29 %) calculated with X, Y and Z velocities, as should be expected. For V_P and V_S core measurements, N4-1.2 has by far the slowest V_P and *VS*, and highest velocity anisotropy. Compared to the *AVP* single crystal anhydrite, the measured *AVP* for N4-1.2 falls out of this range. The other eight North Sea cores and the cuboid plot inside that very range but are still significantly below the general V_P recorded for anhydrite (Fig. 4.6a,c; Table 4.3; Jones and Davison, 2014).

The Odena quarry anhydrite with gypsum core V_S and V_P velocities are below that of the North Sea pure anhydrite samples, with the exception of P-wave velocity of N4- 1.2. All three Òdena quarry samples (BA-6,7,9) are significantly slower than the literature V_P for gypsum and at the very end of the single crystal AV_P range (Fig. 4.6c). Both AV_P and V_S are at $\sim 2\%$, with indications of the cores being very similar to each other in their characteristics. The velocity and anisotropy analysis show differences among the North Sea samples, and between North Sea and Òdena quarry samples that are significant, which could indicate that CPO, grain boundary pattern geometry, SPO, and mineral content could all play significant roles.

4.4.2 Crystallographic preferred orientation and ultrasonic velocity

4.4.2.1 Formation of crystallographic preferred orientation

Analysis of crystallographic orientation data from North Sea and Òdena quarry sample material shows no twinning (laths along {110} with 83.5° misorientations around [100]) in any of the samples, indicating that the microstructures were not generated under conditions favourable for mechanical twinning. Mechanical twins need stress to form, therefore the lack of twinning may indicate either low stress conditions, or another factor such as grain size has limited twin development. Yet, distinct clustering of poles and weak CPOs are present in all analysed sample areas. However, low-angle boundaries point towards deformation by dislocation creep (Regime 1). Diffusion creep by grain boundary sliding (Regime 2) or alignment due to primary growth are possible causes for CPO formation.

The anhydrite in the North Sea samples is lath-shaped and has orthorhombic cleavage. It is known that new anhydrite laths may successively break (mechanically) and rotate earlier formed laths (Warren, 2016). Deformation in the diffusion creep regime for synthetic anhydrite was described by Dell'Angelo and Olgaard (1995), who reported equant, polygonal grains with very low dislocation densities, no subgrain boundaries, no undulatory extinction, and smooth to gently curved grain boundaries after 42 % strain. They also stated that this microstructure was very similar to that in the undeformed anhydrite samples.

The North Sea samples have few low-angle boundaries in larger lath shaped crystals but also grains with higher low-angle boundary content (2° to 10° misorientation). Some of the larger grains also have subgrain areas. For example, in N3-1T it seems that grains that contain low-angle boundaries (i.e., with higher dislocation density) are consumed by low dislocation density grains (Fig. 4.7ai), which is grain boundary migration (GBM). GBM is also known to cause smooth grain boundaries, which can be found in all North Sea samples. It follows that dynamic recrystallisation by GBM and potentially SGR (Regime 1) might have occurred.

The Òdena quarry sample shows a more even distribution of low-angle boundaries throughout, with low-angle boundaries between and along high axial ratio spherulite blades (Fig. 4.12ai). The interpretation of the microstructure of the Òdena quarry sample is that primary gypsum was replaced by anhydrite through a three-dimensional network. Afterwards, secondary gypsum formed through the same network. The presence of blade structures and bands could indicate that these features comprised primary gypsum which, as well as the spherulites, are a typical form of gypsum crystallization, and were pseudomorphed by anhydritization. A secondary, incomplete gypsification stage is evident because gypsum seems to have filled cracks between the anhydrite blades. Preservation of the bladed anhydrite forming spherulites, absence of twin boundaries, and the seemingly random distribution of low-angle misorientation boundaries can all be interpreted as signs of little to no influence of crystal-plastic deformation on the sample.

4.4.2.2 Contribution of crystallographic preferred orientation to ultrasonic velocity Minimum intensity from four North Sea anhydrite data sets plotted against m.u.d. and *M*-index (Fig. 4.11) shows an inverse correlation of decreasing minimum intensity with increasing maximum m.u.d. and *M*-index. CPO is strongest in N2-1 with $M =$ 0.15, and the weakest in N4-2T with $M = 0.12$. The N4 section also produced the slowest S- and P-wave velocities of all samples with N4-1.2 (Fig. 4.6). Limited data on the Òdena quarry anhydrite-gypsum samples suggest a weak CPO for anhydrite with an *M*-index of $M = 0.12$ and an m.u.d. of 2.84. The absence of twinning in the Òdena sample and preservation of spherulitic features point to the weak CPO being formed by primary growth.

Based on the presented data set, it is unlikely that the differences in CPO alone cause the differences between the measured ultrasonic velocities for both *VP* and *VS* for the samples. Nevertheless, the AV_P and AV_S are higher for the North Sea samples, where the CPO is generally stronger for the presented data set.

Nearly all North Sea and all Òdena quarry samples have very low ultrasonic velocities, but within the ranges expected for single crystal end member *VP*. This indicates that both rock types possibly have either: a strong CPO in a slow V_P crystal orientation, which means the CPO over all samples is very similar; or the sample suite contains other characteristics that result in lower-than-expected velocities. Therefore, quantifying the microstructural differences between the North Sea samples and combining the results with those of the three Òdena quarry samples, with emphasis on variation of mineral content, is necessary to evaluate if other factors impact the velocity and velocity anisotropy other than CPO.

The 'shape' of CPOs of the North Sea samples are similar to previously reported CPOs in anhydrite, with a point cluster for {100} in the sample X direction (Hildyard et al.*,* 2011a; Vargas-Meleza et al.*,* 2015). This type of CPO means that the direction of measurement (sample X) is parallel to the fast p-wave velocity direction, i.e., the fast direction is normal to bedding in real space. The point orientation data from sample N3-1T for {100} also suggests fast velocities, but closer to the Y-Z plane. The {100} poles of N4-1II suggest medium velocities in the Y-Z plane, as does N4-2T. The poles to $\{010\}$, which has intermediate V_P and V_S , are almost randomly oriented for all North Sea sample data sets. The CPO for the Òdena quarry sample are weaker than North Sea samples, especially in {100}. In {010}, the clusters of poles are horizontal, which indicates slower velocity directions are in the Y-Z plane for these samples. As S-waves

oscillate perpendicular to the direction of wave propagation, the characteristics of the Y-Z plane is also of importance.

4.4.3 Formation of shape preferred orientation and potential influence on ultrasonic velocity

The most obvious feature in all North Sea samples is the dual SPO, with two sets of lath-shaped grains that are aligned approximately perpendicular to each other. One reason might be that an orthogonal arrangement maximises the packing density of cuboids/laths. The orientation of these SPOs in relation to the axes of the core samples is random in Y-Z and only X is a defined direction, where the long axes of the sample cores match the long axis of the original core (vertical relative to Earth's surface, and approximately normal to layering). The formation of dual SPO is interpreted as an effect of growth, displacement, and breakage of anhydrite laths, rather than a change in the stress field during deformation. There are no signs of pseudomorphism due to the replacement of gypsum.

The maximum magnitude of the fitted ellipse roses ranges between 6.9 % and 8.1 %. Analysis of trace map based fitted ellipse long axis orientation, grain boundary segment orientation statistics, and GBSI density roses all show that there are two preferred orientations of grains, which are most significant in N3-1T and N4-1II (Fig. 4.9 and Appendix C, Fig. C.14). The secondary SPO is weak to negligible in N2-1T (Fig. 4.8) and N4-2T (Appendix C, Fig. C.9 and Fig. 4.10). The SPO strength analysis via GBSI-based minimum intensity analysis plots the North Sea samples over a range of minimum intensities between 0.8 and 0.6. Minimum intensity of 0.8 or above in natural samples can be considered an extremely weak SPO (same as starting patterns for chapters 2 and 3). The minimum intensity analysis shows that N4-2T has the weakest SPO, and N2-1T the strongest SPO of the samples in this study. N2-1T has a relatively high population of small grains that surround few significantly larger grains. The pattern is more inhomogeneous compared to the other maps and the influence of such a grain size distribution on the GBSI method is not understood in detail yet. Weak SPO of N4-2T is visible overall analytical methods, including EBSD fitted ellipse long axis angle rose, grain boundary segment orientation rose and GBSI density rose.

4.4.4 Importance of grain boundaries and fractures for second phase distribution Grain boundaries and fractures are important sites for reactions (see chapter 5). Therefore, such features must be quantified in terms of their geometric and microstructural characteristics. Further, Vargas-Meleza et al. (2015) have shown that gypsum samples with larger content of anhydrite have lower anisotropies than gypsum samples with less or no anhydrite content. They reported AV_P results between 1.37 and 3.48 % and *AVS* results between 0.82 and 13.8 %. Vargas-Meleza et al. (2015) explained such low anisotropies with a strong control of abundance and distribution of porosity and open fractures at ambient laboratory conditions (1 atm and \sim 25 $^{\circ}$ C). Low porosity and connected higher aggregate density due to increasing anhydrite content is assumed to be directly linked to low anisotropy (Vargas-Meleza et al.*,* 2015).

The density of the Òdena quarry samples is 2.76 g cm⁻³ (BA-7) and 2.80 gcm⁻³ (BA-6.9), which is higher than the literature density value for gypsum of 2.31 - 2.33 g cm⁻³ and closer to the literature density for anhydrite of 2.97 g cm^3 shows that they are an anhydrite-dominated mixture. Greyscale threshold analysis of the Òdena quarry anhydrite with gypsum content on various BSE and trace maps results in an anhydrite content of 80 % to 86 % and a gypsum content between 10 % to 18 %. The North Sea anhydrite density ranges between 2.92 g cm⁻³ (N2-1 cuboid) and 2.95 g cm⁻³ (N5-1.2), very close to the published value for pure anhydrite.

In summary, the anhydrite samples with gypsum content have slower P- and S-wave velocities, and low AV_P and AV_S anisotropies (2 %) parallel to the long axis of the cores (X), and lower densities compared to the pure anhydrite samples. Compared to literature values, the anhydrite gypsum samples have slower P-wave velocities than the end-member single crystal anisotropy of anhydrite, and slower P-wave velocities than expected for bulk aggregates of anhydrite and gypsum (Fig. 4.6c). Their AV_P is at the low end of that expected for gypsum single crystals.

Presumably, rocks with little or no SPO have slower P-wave velocities and lower *AVP* compared to bulk anhydrite and gypsum, and are at the very low end of the AV_P range of single crystal gypsum anisotropy (Vargas-Meleza et al., 2015).

However, data presented here suggests that gypsum veins have systematic orientations and spatial distributions because they exploit grain boundaries and fractures of particular orientations. The analysed spherulitic feature (Fig. 4.14, and 4.15) shows that the smallest number of gypsum veins are oriented parallel to the X direction (long axis of the core and also the direction of ultrasonic velocity measurement). Most gypsum veins and grain boundaries are oblique relative to X. This means that the density of gypsum veins and grain boundaries is relatively high in the X direction. The ultrasonic waves have to pass through more phase transition 'surfaces' (i.e., reflectors, attenuators) along X. The distribution of vein gypsum along systematic grain boundaries creates abundant phase transition surfaces.

4.4.5 Wider applicability of the study

The analysed North Sea anhydrite comes from one of Earth's the largest known salt formations, the Permian Zechstein Supergroup (ZSG). Seismic reflection data and very sparse borehole data from the north-western margin of the North Permian Basin demonstrate that the ZSG can be several hundreds or even kilometres thick (e.g., Jackson et al., 2018) and is characterised by a thick sequence of halite and anhydrite in the basin centre (Clark et al., 1998). In the North Sea, the ZSG is also strongly associated with oil and gas exploration and production and been of interest for these industries for a while. But sampling of the salt structures in the ZSG itself is rare, as it is actively avoided during drilling and as a consequence, only limited data is available. Therefore the data presented by this study provides insights that are not solvable with normal exploration tools. The North Sea anhydrite samples used for this study show weak CPO (*M*-index between 0.12 and 0.15) and weak bimodal shape preferred orientation of anhydrite laths. P-wave velocities are very slow for anhydrite (Fig. 4.6c; Table 4.3) and with exception of one sample, AV_P is ~ 8 %, whereas AV_S is considerable at 14 %.

All samples in this study show velocity anisotropies, some are very high, up to 60 % *AVP* and 34 % *AVS.* These early results certainly have indications, as assumption of isotropy can cause false reflector depths for any anisotropic bodies (e.g., Raymer and Kendall, 1997; Jones and Davison, 2014), not only the ZSG.

The results presented for Òdena gypsum show velocities distinctively slower than the literature anhydrite and gypsum velocities (Fig. 4.6) and AV_P and AV_s are both 2 %. The inhomogeneous fabric and gypsum veins represent systematic phase boundaries and demonstrate how processes like hydration are of major importance, as they impact phase content, and create systematic phase distribution, are relevant for seismic velocity measurements in evaporates and other rocks.

4.5 Conclusions

This study contributed to various key issues that have been identified in the past by e.g., Vargas-Meleza et al. (2015), including that velocity anisotropy of evaporites is impacted by more than CPO. The new results support these statements, even though the direct link between the measured ultrasonic velocities and the microstructural anisotropy of the rock salt cuboids could not be determined. There are three main themes this study contributes to:

1) New velocity data is presented

New velocity measurements for natural evaporites with halite, polyhalite, anhydrite, gypsum, and mixed phase rocks from three deposits (North Sea, Òdena, Boulby) were analysed. All samples show velocity anisotropies, some are very high, up to 60 % *AVP* and 34 % *AVS.* The *VP* and *VS* ranges are generally lower than expected from single crystal ranges (that relate to crystallographic orientation), indicating other contributions to velocity variations than simply intrinsic mineralogical anisotropy. Nearly all North Sea and all Odena quarry samples have V_P in the lower end of the ranges for single phase materials. Therefore, both types of rocks possibly have either: a strong CPO in a slow *VP* crystal orientation, which means the CPO over all samples is very similar; or, the sample suite contains other characteristics that lower the velocities. The former idea could be tested by a rock recipe approach. Future work is necessary to quantify the impact of CPO. What was shown is that the grain boundary patterns of both microstructurally analysed sample suites had different characteristics. A systematic study of the influence of anhydrite textures, i.e., textures inherited from primary gypsum compared to porphyroblastic anhydrite textures can provide more insight on the influence of SPO on ultrasonic velocity anisotropy of evaporites.

2) Formation of evaporite microstructures

Crystallographic preferred orientation (CPO) is present in both analysed sample sets. Using multiples of uniform distribution (m.u.d.) and *M*-index as a measure of CPO strength, the maximum strength in North Sea anhydrite is $M = 0.15$ (N2-1T) and the maximum m.u.d. is 5.50 (N3-1T) and a little lower in Odena quarry samples with $M =$

0.12 and m.u.d. of 2.84. Low-angle subgrain boundaries (2° to 10° misorientation) are common, whereas twinning with misorientations of 83.5° around an axis parallel to [100] is not recorded for either of the sample sets.

The two sample suites tested show very different microstructures. The North Sea anhydrite samples had a systematic orientation of grain boundaries, caused by a dual SPO of lath-shaped grains, with a perpendicular relationship. The mean grain size ranges between $26.50 \pm 31.61 \,\mu m$ and $89.71 \pm 57.32 \,\mu m$, the mean axial ratio between 1.70 ± 0.69 and 2.35 ± 1.29 , and the minimum intensity, introduced for quantification of SPO strength, ranges between 0.8 and 0.6.

SPO was not quantified for the Òdena quarry samples, and based on the spherulitic and cleaved texture, it is assumed that there is none. Although, the spherulitic texture might also have an impact on variations of V_S and V_P velocities, as it is a common geometrical feature of the microstructure of these samples. Further, the gypsum veins in the Òdena quarry samples were also systematically oriented and distributed.

The North Sea samples show grain boundary migration features and therefore, dynamic recrystallisation by GBM and potentially SGR (Regime 1) might have occurred. Preservation of the blades, absence of twin boundaries, and the rather random distribution of low-angle misorientation boundaries of Òdena quarry samples can all be interpreted as signs for low to no impact of deformation on the sample. The main formation mechanisms are dehydration and hydration.

3) Introduction of a workflow

A more complete microstructural characterisation of evaporites was presented, which includes CPO and automated grain boundary-based SPO quantification that could be used in predictive models of velocity anisotropy. The workflow combines EBSD crystallographic orientation analysis, established fitted ellipse based SPO quantification, basic grain boundary segment orientation statistical analysis, high resolution grain boundary segment intercept density orientation and minimum intensity analysis, and fracture (vein) distribution and orientation analysis. This workflow is a step to build on in future studies to quantify the impact of petrofabrics on acoustic wave velocity anisotropy.

CHAPTER 5

Rapid hydration and weakening under stress - Implications for Earth Systems

Abstract

Hydration is an important geological process that influences the rheology and geochemistry of rocks, and the fluid budget of the Earth's crust and mantle. Steady state differential compaction (ssdc), dry and 'wet' tests under confining pressure, and axial stress were conducted to investigate the influence of triaxial stress on hydration in anhydrite-gypsum aggregates for the first time. Characterization of the samples before and after triaxial experiments were performed with optical and scanning electron microscopy, including energy dispersive spectroscopy and electron backscatter diffraction mapping.

Stress-strain data reveals that samples that underwent steady state differential compaction in the presence of fluids are \sim 14 to \sim 41 % weaker. The microstructural analysis of samples shows that there is a strong temporal and spatial connection between the geometry, distribution, and evolution of fractures and hydration products. The increasing reaction surface area in combination with pre-existing gypsum in a gypsum-bearing anhydrite rock lead to rapid gypsification.

The crystallographic orientations of newly-formed vein-gypsum have a systematic preferred orientation for long distances along veins, beyond the grain boundaries of wall-rock anhydrite. Gypsum crystallographic orientations in $\{100\}$ and $\{010\}$ are systematically and preferentially aligned parallel to the direction of maximum shear stress (45 \degree to σ_l). Gypsum is also not always topotactically linked to the wall-rock anhydrite in the immediate vicinity. This study proposes the selective inheritance of crystal orientations from favourably oriented wall-rock anhydrite grains for the minimization of free energy for nucleation under stress led to the systematic preferred orientation of large new gypsum grains.

A sequence is suggested for hydration under stress that requires the development of fractures accompanied by localised hydration. Hydration along fractures with a range of apertures up to 120 µm occurred in under 6 hours. Once formed, gypsum-filled

veins represent weak surfaces and are the locations of further shear fracturing, brecciation, and eventual brittle failure.

These findings imply that non-hydrostatic stress has a significant influence on hydration rates and subsequent mechanical strength of rocks. This phenomenon is applicable across a wide range of geological environments in Earth's crust and upper mantle.

5.1 Introduction

Hydration of minerals and rocks plays an important role in the Earth's crust and upper mantle, where it is a common process that influences the dynamic evolution of rocks in terms of their fabrics, geochemistry, and rheology (e.g., Olgaard et al., 1995; De Paola et al., 2009; Llana-Fúnez et al., 2012; Leclère et al., 2018). However, hydration of rocks under non-hydrostatic stress conditions has not been fully explored. Given the ubiquitous presence of non-hydrostatic conditions in the Earth, this represents a significant knowledge gap of an important geological process.

This study focuses on the influence of stress on hydration in the $CaSO₄·H₂O$ system (Fig. 5.1a), specifically the hydration of anhydrite $(CaSO_4,$ orthorhombic) to gypsum $(CaSO₄·2H₂O$, monoclinic), as an analogue for hydration systems in Earth's crust and upper mantle. This is a simple geochemical system, and hydration should be achievable under moderate laboratory conditions.

Hydration of anhydrite under experimental differential stress conditions using natural polycrystalline rocks has been studied only recently (Li et al., 2019; Xu et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2020), with focus on the mechanical properties of anhydrite (Yin and Xie 2019), and the expansion or swelling associated with hydration (Serafeimidis and Anagnostou, 2013; Xu et al., 2019; Li et al., 2019).

Additionally, long term (several months long) hydration experiments, mainly on powders of sieved natural and synthetic anhydrite under hydrostatic conditions (water) have failed to produce hydration products or show relatively slow hydration rates (e.g., Ramsdell and Patridge, 1929; Leininger et al., 1957; Hardie, 1967;).

Figure 5.1: Preparation and set up for triaxial experiments. a) Phase diagram of the CaSO4 ·H2 O system, including data from Klimchouk (1996), Mirwald (2008), and Bedford (2017). An arrow marks approximately the pressure–temperature space location of the experiments. b) Schematic diagram of the configuration of the triaxial rock deformation apparatus (Sanchez TRI-X 250MPa/200°C). c) Experimental setup for i: dry, ii: 'wet', and iii: steady state differential compaction (ssdc) mode tests.

Hydration of anhydrite to gypsum, also called gypsification, is of interest in several economic fields, including mining, oil and gas, and storage of hydrocarbons, hazardous, and nuclear waste (e.g., Mertineit et al., 2012; Singh et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2020). It is also highly relevant in construction, as gypsum is a major cement and plaster ingredient (e.g., Farnsworth, 1925; Leininger et al., 1957; Sievert et al., 2005).

Moreover, predicting anhydrite hydration is key in civil engineering, because of the potential rock volume change related to the reaction (e.g., Sass and Burbaum, 2010; Singh et al., 2018). Due to its relevance in those fields and because gypsification is also very common in nature (e.g., Farnsworth, 1925; De Paola et al., 2007; Bedford, 2017) under surface conditions, the $CaSO₄·H₂O$ system has been studied scientifically for over 90 years.

Furthermore, anhydrite-bearing evaporite sequences are often the weakest horizons in sedimentary basins and form detachment horizons in foreland fold and thrust belts (e.g., Heard and Rubey, 1966; Hildyard et al., 2011). Therefore, processes that can potentially affect the mechanics of anhydrite-bearing evaporites, such as hydration, are significant because they potentially have control over the rheology and deformation behaviour of sedimentary basins and fold and thrust belts.

Laboratory experiments of hydration of anhydrite under an applied non-hydrostatic stress field have not yet been attempted. Consequently, the effects of stress on hydration remain to be assessed. This study utilises triaxial deformation apparatus to investigate the rheological and microstructural response of natural anhydrite under wet and dry non-hydrostatic conditions and different strain rates.

In more detail, the effects of non-hydrostatic stress and strain rate on the hydration of anhydrite to gypsum via triaxial deformation experiments on natural rock samples with known initial compositions and microstructures were studied. The ability to control parameters governing and influencing the reaction activity (reaction time) of hydration of anhydrite to gypsum is essential to test the magnitude of their effects on the reactions. The following parameters were controlled: i) material-specific characteristics (petrography) such as grain size, mineral content, and fabric; ii) experimentally controllable physical and mechanical parameters, including temperature, fluid, effective, and confining pressure, applied stress field and strain rate; and iii) geochemical parameters like fluid composition.

5.1.1 The influence of stress on chemical reactions

There are two different stress–material interactions to consider for understanding the impact of stress on chemical reactions (Wheeler, 2018). Normal stress (anisotropy) along grain interfaces and between interfaces with different orientations has the main impact on chemical reactions in the Earth, and thus, plays the key role in quantifying stress-related chemical processes (Wheeler, 2014; 2018). Chemical potential depends on a "weighted" mean stress, which means that the magnitude and orientation of stress have a relatively minor impact (Wheeler, 2018).

Experiments show that narrow aqueous or other films along (grain) boundaries may persist, even if normal stress is greater than fluid pressure (Hickman and Evans, 1995, Israelachvili, 2010). They are regarded as stressed solids rather than fluids (e.g., Israelachvili, 1992; Wheeler, 2018), which provide fast diffusion pathways (Rutter, 1976).

Integral parameters for models are the grain boundary structure, assumptions about the mobility of specific components, and reaction activity (Wheeler, 2018). These include grain boundary film properties like the connection between surface and interface energies and film structure (Hickman and Evans, 1995), and the relationship of fluid film thickness to normal stress (Israelachvili, 2010). The basic concept is that grain boundaries, representing a small-scale volume, are locally buffered by (i.e., are in local equilibrium with) the adjacent solids (Wheeler, 2018).

Wheeler (2018) states that diffusion is the main mechanism of stress-related chemical processes and is active along long-range chemical reaction pathways that are provided by interconnected interfaces under crustal conditions. It is established that diffusion rates along interfaces such as grain boundaries are several orders of magnitude faster compared to intracrystalline diffusion (Dohmen and Milke, 2010).

Further, segregation of (incompatible) elements and their enrichment in grain interfaces is considered to have a significant impact on the physical and chemical properties of mantle rocks (Hiraga et al., 2007). Interfacial segregation linked with grain boundary character distribution (GBCD) may lead to grain boundary energy minimization (Tacchetto et al., 2021). It follows that interfacial segregation potentially influences if and where diffusion is active or accelerated in natural samples during hydration.

5.1.2 Review of research in the CaSO4·H2O system

The research on interaction and evolution of stress, permeability, strength, and reaction kinetics has concentrated on the dehydration reaction of gypsum (Olgaard et al., 1995; Ko et al., 1995; 1997; Wang and Wong 2003; Milsch and Scholz 2005; Milsch et al., 2011; Llana-Fúnez et al., 2012; Leclère et al., 2016).

Hydration of anhydrite to gypsum has been studied mainly on powders of sieved natural and synthetic anhydrite under hydrostatic conditions (e.g., Leininger et al., 1957; Hardie, 1967; Sievert et al., 2005). Hardie (1967) studied the influence of temperature on pure anhydrite powders with different grain sizes in experiments lasting about 8 months at different temperatures between 25 - 60°C, without recording hydration. Only the addition of gypsum 'seeds' at similar conditions induced relatively rapid hydration. A 1:1 mixture of polycrystalline anhydrite and gypsum produced 3 % more gypsum after 83 days (Hardie, 1967).

Evolution of strength, stress versus strain behaviour, permeability, and the role of grain size and fabric without any hydration or dehydration reaction in gypsum and anhydrite has been studied by Bell (1994), and De Paola et al. (2009). Bell (1994) found that anhydrite has a 'strong' unconfined compressive strength (102.9 MPa and 97.5 MPa for two types of anhydrites), whereas gypsum is ranked as 'medium' (average ranges between 24.1 MPa and 34.8 MPa, depending on sample depth). Based on the stress versus strain behaviour, the author found that the onset of plastic deformation is at an earlier stage during axial loading for gypsum.

Effective pressure has a significant effect on the permeability evolution under confined stress conditions and controls the brittle to ductile transition of polycrystalline, pure anhydrite during deformation (De Paola et al., 2009). During brittle failure, the permeability increased dynamically to about $2 - 3$ orders of magnitude. The dynamic permeability and porosity evolution during the triaxial loading tests can be summarised in three stages: i) permeability and volume reduction through compaction is in progress, ii) permeability increase due to the onset of intra-granular micro-cracking, and iii) volume increase (dilation) and brittle failure (De Paola et al., 2009). The strength of dry anhydrite cap rock during triaxial tests increased with increasing confining pressure and slightly weakened with increasing temperature, while fluid contact prior to failure changes the effective pressure and lowers the strength, but not the volumetric (permeability) behaviour (Hangx et al., 2010; 2011).

5.1.3 Mechanisms of anhydrite hydration

Petrographic observations from natural rocks and experimental studies indicate that the mechanisms behind hydration (and dehydration) are solution-precipitation, and direct replacement with additional water available (Hardie, 1967; Sievert et al., 2005; Jaworska and Nowak, 2013; Bedford, 2017). Secondary gypsum is produced initially in the most fractured areas of anhydrite rocks, and forms along cracks and grain boundaries (Jaworska, 2012; Warren, 2016).

Activators speed up the time for the appearance of maximum specific surface area and the rate of formation of maximum gypsum. Leininger et al. (1957) studied the effect of acids, bases, and salts, particularly alkali sulphates, and showed that cations serve as activators and accelerate the hydration of gypsum, whereas anions decelerate the reaction.

Sievert et al. (2005) developed a concept for solution-precipitation that is now widely accepted (Pina, 2009; Jaworska and Nowak, 2013; Lebedev and Avilina, 2019). Hydration experiments of natural anhydrite in a ball mill with water and (activator-) solutions, such as H_2SO_4 (pH 1), 5 % MgSO₄.7H₂O and solution of calcium hydroxide, as a function of time and temperature show that the maximum specific surface area develops quickly and does not coincide with the formation rate of the maximum amount of gypsum, which takes rather longer to achieve. There is a time lag between adsorption of ions on the surface of anhydrite, which increases the specific surface area, and the formation of gypsum.

Sievert et al. (2005) proposed a five step mechanism of hydration via solutionprecipitation: i) rapid initial partial dissolution of $CaSO₄$ and adsorption of hydrated Ca^{2+} and SO_4^2 ions at the surface of anhydrite; ii) slow increase of thickness of adsorbed layer; iii) crack formation in the adsorbed layer and counter migration of H₂O (in) and Ca^{2+} , SO_4^{2-} ions (out); iv) formation of gypsum nuclei at the surface of anhydrite and v) formation of nuclei is followed by rapid gypsum crystallization.

5.2 Material and methods

All samples have been analysed before and, where possible, after triaxial loading tests under confining pressure via scanning electron microscopy using backscattered electron imaging (BSE), energy-dispersive X-ray spectroscopy (EDS), and electron backscatter diffraction (EBSD). Grain and fracture characteristics and mineral content were analysed via a range of software, including FracPaQ (Healy et al., 2017), ImageJ (Schneider et al., 2012), and Oxford Instruments Channel5 for EBSD data processing.

5.2.1 Sample description and preparation

A total of eight natural anhydrite cores were used in triaxial experiments. Six samples were run with water present, and two without the presence of water. The core plugs

 were extracted from two anhydrite-dominated surface outcrop field samples (ID prefix 'Ò') of the Òdena Gypsum Formation, which is the lower gypsum term of the Catalonia Saline Formation (upper Eocene) in the Pyrenean basin, Spain (Ortí Cabo et al., 1985).

Macroscopically, the Òdena samples are of a pale beige colour with discrete centimetre-scale domains that contain light brown clay or mud inclusions (Fig. 5.2a). The anhydrite rocks have a minor natural gypsum content. All samples show fibroradiate crystals of anhydrite (Fig. 5.2b,c). These spherulites appear either isolated or arranged in centimetre long bands.

Microscopically, gypsum is located in between the anhydrite blades of the spherulites in veins (up to 10 µm in aperture), in the spherulite centres, as well as in between spherulites in broader fractures (up to 50 μ m in aperture) and in the centre of the band structures.

EBSD analysis shows that the crystal orientation in the spherulite 'blades' changes successively with radial rotation, with lattice orientation being mirrored from the centre (Fig. 5.2d; Appendix D, Fig D.4). The statistical description of the intensity of the fabric based on clustering of poles on pole figures, known as the 'multiple of uniform density' (m.u.d.) was calculated. A preferred fabric, or CPO, exists where $m.u.d. > 1.$

One additional core of pure gypsum was taken from an outcrop from Volterra, Italy, to compare the stress-strain behaviour and strength of anhydrite-dominated versus gypsum-dominated rocks. Volterra gypsum is a well-studied polycrystalline material (Heard and Rubey, 1966; Ko et al., 1997; Llana-Fúnez et al., 2012), and has been used in many experiments (e.g., Olgaard et al., 1995; Hildyard et al., 2011; Brantut et al., 2012).

Figure 5.2: Macro- and microscopic sample material characterization. a) Axial orientation of cylindrical samples, whereas the long axis is defined as X and perpendicular directions are YZ (sample Ò2, pre-experiment), b) backscatter electron

image, (sample Ò8, post experiment), c) IPFx EBSD map (sample block, initial material, 4 µm step size), d) equal area, lower hemisphere pole figures of c). See Appendix D, Fig. D.4,5 for further characterization.

As required for the triaxial apparatus, cores with a length (X axis) of 60 mm and a diameter of 25 mm (Y,Z dimension) were drilled out of sample blocks. Given that the sample material does not display any preferred orientation fabric on macroscale and was collected from an outcrop, cores were drilled perpendicular to bedding. The Volterra gypsum is homogeneous with no foliation, thus the orientation of the core from this material is arbitrary.

Core plugs were drilled in the presence of water and were air-dried for 24 hours immediately afterward to mitigate any potential alteration effects. It was presumed that the exposure time to water at ambient laboratory conditions did not permit hydration of the anhydrite before deformation experiments. Pre- and post-experiment analysis of thin sections validates this assumption.

A hole was then drilled (dry) into the centre of the anhydrite cores along X using a drill head with a diameter of 1.5 mm through the axis of each core to increase the fluid flow and sample surface to facilitate faster and more intense hydration. All core plugs intended to be used in the experiment with fluid pressure were immersed in water and left to soak 10 minutes before starting experimental runs.

Core plugs were prepared for triaxial experiments by encapsulation in black viton jackets to ensure a seal is formed during the experiments that shield the sample from the oil used to generate confining pressure in the cell.

5.2.2 Microstructural characterisation

Surplus material sourced from directly adjacent to the core plugs was used to prepare polished thin sections in core plug reference frame X-Y,Z and X=Y,Z-Y,Z direction before starting any experiment. Thin sections of the samples resulting from the experiments were mostly cut parallel to the X axis (σ_i) .

Thin sections were prepared for scanning electron microscopy (SEM) via polishing with alumina, followed by a final polish with 0.6 μ m colloidal silica in NaOH using a Buehler Vibromet II polisher for 2 to 4 hours. An evaporative carbon coating was applied to prevent charging during SEM. Backscattered electron (BSE) imaging was conducted with a Zeiss EVO MA10 SEM fitted with an Oxford Instruments INCA Xray microanalysis system.

A Tescan MIRA3 field emission scanning electron microscope (FE-SEM) with an Oxford instruments electron backscatter diffraction (EBSD) acquisition system, including a Symmetry EBSD detector in John de Laeter Centre at Curtin University, was used to quantify crystallographic microstructures.

Secondary electron (SE) and BSE images were acquired, and EBSD maps with step sizes ranging from 1.7 to 50 μ m were collected (Appendix D). Data acquisition and processing settings as well as processing procedures (Table 5.1) followed those of Vargas-Meleza et al. (2015) and Timms et al. (2017; 2019).

Table 5.1: Scanning electron microscopy settings and electron backscatter diffraction acquisition and processing parameters.

SEM					
	Make/model			Tescan MIRA3 FE-SEM	
	EBSD acquisition system			Oxford Instruments AZtec, version	
				4.3/Symmetry EBSD Detector	
	EDX acquisition system			Oxford Instruments AZtec, version	
				$4.3/X$ Max 20 mm SDD	
	EBSD processing software			Oxford Instruments Channel 5.12.72.0	
	Acceleration voltage (kV)			20	
	Working distance (mm)			18.5	
	Tilt			70°	
EBSD match units					
	Phase	Space group	β ^o)		
	Anhydrite Cmcm			Hawthorne and Ferguson (1975)	
	Gypsum	C2/c	114.3	Schonfield et al. (1996); Boeyens and	
				Ichhram (2002); Hildyard et al. (2009)	
EBSP acquisition, indexing and processing					
	EBSP acquisition speed		40	Band detection (min/max)	6/8
	(Hz)				
	EBSP Background		64	Mean angular deviation (all	$< 1^{\circ}$
	(frames)			phases)	
	EBSP Binning		4×4	Wild spike correction	yes
	EBSP Grain		high	Nearest neighbour zero solution extrapolation	6
	Hough resolution		60		

Isolated, erroneous EBSD data points were removed using a 'wild spike' correction in Channel 5, and a zero-solution extrapolation to 6 nearest neighbours was applied routinely. Misindexing of anhydrite with a range of systematic crystallographic orientation relationships was identified and data were corrected using the function in

the Tango module of Channel 5 (see chapter 4 for further explanation and Table C.1 for a list of corrected relationships)

For phase quantification, BSE images were combined with EDX phase identification data and analysed with ImageJ software (Schneider et al., 2012), using a greyscale threshold to determine phase abundance. Minor uncertainties of this approach include greyscale variation at phase boundaries and/or due to topography of the polished surface. Additionally, fracture patterns in post-experiment sample material were quantified by manual digital tracing of gypsum-filled fractures and veins in BSE images followed by FracPaQ analysis of orientation and length of the mapped linear fracture trace segments (Healy et al., 2017).

5.2.3 Triaxial deformation and hydration experimental methods

All testing was conducted with the high-pressure, high-temperature (HP/HT) triaxial rock deformation apparatus (TRI-X 250 MPa/200°C) from Sanchez Technologies (Fig. 5.1b). The parameters chosen for testing are listed in Table 5.2. The experiments followed three different testing modes: (i) dry; (ii) 'wet'; and (iii) steady state differential compaction (ssdc) under fluid pressure (Fig. 5.1c).

Table 5.2: Triaxial test parameters: $\dot{\epsilon}$ **– strain rate,** P_c **– confining pressure,** P_f **– fluid pressure,** P_e **– effective pressure,** t_{fe} **– fluid exposure time,** $t_{s, side}$ **– steady state differential compaction time, failure - stress strain curve / post-experiment core habitus,** σ_p **– peak differential stress. *Catastrophic failure after 1 hr 11 min during steady state differential compaction. ** peak stress reached during steady state differential compaction.**

The (stress field) principal stress configuration was $\sigma_1 > \sigma_2 = \sigma_3$ throughout runs in (i) and (ii) mode and achieved through the application of a strain rate ('active' deformation). The modes (i) dry and (ii) 'wet' were created to evaluate material strength and stress versus strain behaviour for the sample material in different strain rate and pressure settings. During 'wet' mode tests, fluid pressure was applied before initiating the strain rate.

In case of (iii) ssdc under fluid pressure, the strain rate was put on hold after achieving \sim 100 MPa differential stress (75 % yield stress of the 'wet' experiments $\dot{\text{O}}5,6$), to achieve micro-cracking and before coalescing shear fractures are supposed to have formed. Only then was water flooded into the sample chamber and fluid pressure applied. The principal stress configuration was isotropic, i.e., $\sigma_1 = \sigma_2 = \sigma_3$.

If failure was not achieved within 15 hours of ssdc, the strain rate was reapplied, which reinstated the respective stress field. At the end of each experiment of modes (ii) and (iii) the vitrion jackets were opened and the samples were placed in an oven at 50° C for \sim 30 minutes to arrest any further hydration from proceeding.

5.3 Results

5.3.1 Triaxial tests – mechanical data

5.3.1.1 Macroscopic sample characteristics

Brittle fractures are readily visible in the post-test cores, with different characteristics depending on the deformation mode (Fig. 5.3a, Appendix D Fig. D.6,7).

All samples deformed in dry mode show bulging around the middle of the long x-axis. The bulging zone is showing intense fracturing via two sets of shear fractures, both with an approximate angle of 30° to σ_j . Most of the samples experienced localized failure.

Samples after 'wet' testing mode show intense fracturing. The fractures follow the same pattern described for the dry samples, with shear fractures.

The main shear faults after ssdc are an area of intense fracturing, filled with brecciated material. The resulting lateral bulges are either not faulted or extremely faulted, compared to the dry and 'wet' test samples. Altogether, the pieces resulting from fracturing seem smaller in size and are coated by a pale grey, soft, viscous layer.

5.3.1.2 Mechanical data

The different modes result in distinctly different deformation behaviour, shown in differential stress versus axial strain curves (Fig. 5.3b). All samples show an initial phase of rapid hardening up until approximately 10 to 20 MPa differential stress. After this, total strain either stabilises or shows a minimal increase, with increasing stress. The next stage is a phase of linear elastic deformation until yield stress is reached, after which the differential stress decreases. Loading after yield stress results in different behaviour, depending on the test mode (see Appendix D, Fig. D.6,7,8,9,10 for details and additional data).

Figure 5.3: Post-experimental mechanical results. a) Photographs of post-experiment cores after undergoing all three test modes. b) Stress versus strain curves, strain (%) in the shortening direction x (σ_{j}) **on the x-axis is plotted against differential stress (** $\sigma_{\textit{diff}},$ **axial stress/radial pressure) on the y-axis. Catastrophic failure marked for Ò1 at the point of a rapid increase of stable strain during steady state differential compaction (ssdc) phase (no strain rate applied, stable confining and fluid pressure). See Appendix D, Fig. D.6,7,8,9,10, and digital Appendix D for additional information.**

Dry tests show either strain hardening $\overline{(O7)}$, or a phase of constant differential stress with increasing strain, and with increasing tendency to slight weakening ($\dot{O}8$). The Volterra gypsum is considerably weaker compared to all anhydrite tests. The linear elastic response is limited to stresses and strains below 40 MPa and 0.25 %, respectively. The stress-strain relationship of the dry tests shows neither strain hardening nor softening and is without any sign of failure during the ongoing test.

The 'wet' tests show considerably weaker behaviour compared to the dry tests. Strain weakening or softening is displayed after reaching peak differential strength (Table 5.2). The 'wet' experiments are stopped when steep catastrophic strain weakening happens.

The ssdc experiments behave similarly to 'wet' and dry experiments during the first stages until strain rate is set to 0 (constant) before yield point is reached $($ \sim 100 $-$ 110 MPa) and fluid pressure is applied $(20 - 90)$ MPa, Table 5.2) in under one minute. Sample Ò1 was stable with increasing strain for about 1 hour, before catastrophic failure at 1.35 % strain and 99 MPa differential stress.

Catastrophic failure occurred at higher differential stress and lower strain conditions than when 'wet' same condition tests and Ò2 showed steep catastrophic strain weakening. During the ssdc phase, strain increases, and the stress conditions are stable for sample $\dot{O}2$. Compared with samples $\dot{O}5$ and $\dot{O}6$, which were run with the same strain rate, Ò2 is weaker and differential strain decreases in a steeper trend.

5.3.2 Microstructures

5.3.2.1 Fracture and gypsum-filled vein pattern analysis

A fracture pattern was analysed for gypsum-filled veins from BSE images of a thin section from 'wet' mode $\dot{O}3$ sample. This sample failed via one main shear fracture (Fig. 5.4, Appendix D, Fig. D.6), which left enough solid material for detailed analysis of a 'wet' mode sample. Mapping of gypsum-filled veins in a part of the sample that features a significant vein system yielded a representative dataset for orientation analysis of all gypsum veins in view with apertures $> 25 \mu m$ and of a sufficient dataset of identifiable $\leq 25 \mu m$ wide narrow gypsum-filled veins.

Figure 5.4: Distribution of gypsum veins in sample Ò3 after 'wet' experimental run. a) BSE image showing the distribution of phases. b) Map of gypsum-filled veins, with segments coloured for orientation and line width representing vein widths. Not all fractures smaller 25 µm are traced due to their high abundance. c) Length-weighted segment orientation rose diagrams corresponding to the dataset shown in b), with 5° bin size and consistent colour legend (0 – 180°). Marked in red is the circular mean angle,

calculated by FracPaQ (Healy et al., 2017). Marked in blue is the predicted shear fracture angle of 30° from x (σ_1) in an Andersonian system.

Orientation analysis of all gypsum-filled fracture segments in 2D shows a preferred orientation with a prominent peak close to 30 $^{\circ}$ from the core axis (and therefore to σ_1) of all aperture classes (Fig. 5.4c). The wider, less abundant cracks and gypsum-filled veins show stronger preferred orientations than narrower cracks/veins or those observed in the pre-experiment Òdena anhydrite.

The preferred orientation of $> 25 \mu m$ gypsum-filled veins is like shear and extensional fracture orientations predicted by the orientation of the applied stress field during the experiment: macroscopic fractures visible in this thin section that were created by the triaxial test should have azimuths of either 30°/210° or 150°/330° relative to X, the equivalent direction of the principal stress σ , (Fig. 5.4). However, gypsum infill implies an extensional component to the kinematics of these structures.

In detail, there are two different preferred orientations dominant in fracture populations of different widths. Veins narrower than 25 µm are almost evenly distributed around 1 % for all directions with exception of a distinct peak around 45° counter-clockwise from x (Fig. 5.4c). This peak coincides with the trend of cleavage in a large anhydrite grain that dominates the lower part of the map.

Analysis of gypsum-filled vein segments with widths in the ranges of $25 - 50 \mu m$, $50 - 100 \mu m$, and $> 100 \mu m$ show that the preferred orientation gets stronger with increasing width of the veins (standard deviation of circular mean decreases, whereas resultant increases with increasing width) (Fig. 5.4c). Furthermore, segment traces are longer (average segment length in pixels: $6.41 - 9.87 - 13.54$) with increasing vein width.

5.3.2.2 Crystallographic orientation analysis of newly-formed gypsum

Crystallographic orientation mapping was done for anhydrite and gypsum of the same area of 'wet' mode Ò3 sample from Figure 5.4 (Fig. 5.5, additional data in Appendix D, Fig. D.11,12,13,14,15). The dominant form of anhydrite in the upper part of the map are spherulites comprising radially oriented anhydrite blades that progressively change their crystallographic orientation (Fig. 5.5a). The spherulites have an approximate diameter of \sim 700 to 1250 µm.

y

Figure 5.5: Electron backscatter diffraction analysis of the same area shown in Fig. 5.4 from sample Ò3, deformed in 'wet' testing mode. a) EBSD IPFx map of detected anhydrite with underlying backscatter image. b) Complementary IPFx map of detected

gypsum. Magnification of I) and II) to compare IPFx of host anhydrite with vein-hosted gypsum. c), d), and e) Respective equal area, lower hemispheres pole figures of anhydrite and gypsum. Marked in blue is the predicted shear fracture angle of 30° from x (σ_1) in **an Andersonian system. See Appendix D, Fig. 12,13,14,15 for additional data.**

Scattered between the spherulites are clusters of blocky crystals with approximate diameters in the range of 70 to 350 µm (Fig. 5.5a). The third fabric component is made up of large, strained crystals $(1000 \mu m \log)$ with cleavage, dominating the lower part of the map and visible in green colours in the IPFx map (Fig. 5.5a).

Anhydrite in the mapped area shows a strong CPO with the pole to {010} orientated \sim 40° counter-clockwise from x (Fig. 5.5c). This fabric is dominated by aligned (cleaved) components of the large crystals, whereas the crystallographic orientations of the blocky grains are randomly oriented (Fig. 5.5a). The majority of the gypsum present in the mapped area is concentrated in the main vein structure (Fig. 5.5b). Only a small proportion of the gypsum is distributed in 'traces' inside the anhydrite fabrics.

Orientation mapping shows that the gypsum filling the main veins forms domains (grains) up to \sim 1000 µm long sections have a similar crystallographic orientation (Fig. 5.5bI,II). Only a small fraction of crystals shows different crystallographic orientations. However, the EBSD map shows that, locally, the sizes and spatial positions of gypsum grains in the veins do not have any relationship with neighbouring anhydrite in the wall rock (Fig. 5.5bI,II).

Nevertheless, pole figures show that poles to {010} of anhydrite and poles to {100} of gypsum show broad alignment (Fig. 5.5c,d,e). Similarly, poles to {001} of anhydrite and poles to {010} of gypsum tend to align in some parts of the veins (Fig. 5.5c,d,e; Appendix D, Fig. D.16,17,18,19).

Overall, there is no clear link between crystallographic orientation of vein gypsum and the orientation of principal stress σ_l , or predicted shear fracture planes. However, there is a clustering of poles to $\{100\}$ and $\{010\}$ in gypsum at approximately 45° to σ_l , which is parallel to the direction of maximum shear stress (Fig. 5.5c,d,e).

5.3.2.3 Characterisation of fractures after steady state differential compaction

The fabric elements and phase abundance related to ssdc followed by failure are analysed from a BSE image of one of the main shear planes of Ò2 (Fig. 5.6; see Appendix D, Fig. D.20,21,22,23,24 for further data). The thin section of this sample

provides the opportunity to study gypsification related to shear fractures after ssdc. Five domains (A to E) are defined mostly after the phase abundance contrast.

Figure 5.6: Analysis of a shear fracture in sample Ò2 after steady state differential compaction and failure. The area in the image shows the main shear fracture that divides the lower, intact end piece of the sample core from an intact side slab. a) Backscatter electron image with domains (A – D) defined by texture and composition. Dolomite is identified based on habitus and experience from EDX results of other areas in the thin section. b) Greyscale threshold settings defined to quantify % area of phases from the backscatter image analysis via ImageJ. c) Bar chart to show % area of phases in domains

and mean values of the pre-test Òdena anhydrite (same thresholds applied, see Appendix D, Fig. D.25,26,27,28, and Table D.1). Open fractures and dolomite overlap in greyscale.

In detail, defining the A - B boundary is made by compromising between abundance and fabric characteristics. The $B - C$ boundary is easily placed by tracing a fault plane. The $C - D$ boundary is defined mainly by the compaction contrast between domains. The $D - E$ boundary results from a combination of fault horizon and material abundance.

Domain A has mostly blades of anhydrite with sharp edges, the spherulitic structures are still visible and gypsum is located interstitially between these blades. Towards the domain boundary, the anhydrite is blocky, with edges that range from sharp but most commonly are rounded. There is no evidence of rotation of grains in these domains due to the kinematics of the experiment.

Domain B is dominated by gypsum with a mosaic of isolated anhydrite grains (inclusions). Anhydrite is mostly rounded, some with evidence of rotation with respect to one another. The abundance of gypsum increases towards domain C, forming a layer of pure gypsum.

Domain C mainly consists of clasts that contain anhydrite, gypsum, or both, and with no significant matrix. The size (long axis) of the gypsum clasts ranges from $\leq 1 \mu m$ to $> 100 \mu$ m. The big gypsum clasts can be highly fractured, with sporadic smaller anhydrite grains at the rims or as ~ 1 µm small inclusions. Almost half of the domain is porous, and gypsum content is higher than anhydrite content.

In domain D, the anhydrite grains are rotated, and embedded into a gypsum matrix. The edges are round to semi-round in shape and the particle size is up to 25 μ m (length of long axis). The domain is highly brecciated with contact between particles. The boundary to domain D is defined by a series of fractures.

The initial fabric is preserved in domain E but highly affected, showing abundant intraand inter-granular fracturing. Inter-granular fractures are mostly filled with gypsum, whereas intra-granular fractures are predominantly empty. The shape of the edges of the anhydrite grains ranges from sharp to slightly rounded. Abundance analysis results are that more than half of the domain consists of anhydrite.

5.4 Discussion

5.4.1 Evidence for formation of new gypsum

The strongest evidence for successful hydration and formation of gypsum is represented by the breccia vein shown in Figure 5.6. The main vein orientation has an orientation of 37.5° to x (σ_i) , which is consistent with a shear fracture caused by the ssdc mode experiment. Optical assessment and greyscale threshold analysis shows that the gypsum content in and around the shear fracture is significantly higher compared to the initial sample material (Fig. 5.2 b, Appendix D Fig. D25,26,27,28, Table D.1). The higher abundance of gypsum and rounded, rotated anhydrite grains in the margins (domain B, D) of the breccia vein are evidence for active (syn-experiment) gypsification.

The centre of the breccia vein (Fig. 5.6, domain C) contains $> 100 \mu m$ gypsum clasts, which is orders of magnitude larger than any observed pre-experiment gypsum, located in centres of anhydrite spherulites and short narrow $(50 \mu m)$ veins (Fig. 5.2b; Appendix D Fig. D.1,2,3). These clasts can contain small anhydrite inclusions and are derived from newly-formed gypsum (Fig. 5.6 a). Based on the distribution of the anhydrite inclusions at the margins of the gypsum clasts, the gypsum was part of a shear interface with active gypsification before brecciation occurred.

The formation of the gypsum vein system from sample Ò3, documented after a 'wet' mode experiment (Fig. 5.4a,b) is consistent with syn-experiment gypsification and deformation. The wide vein apertures $(>= 50 \text{ µm})$ in combination with the systematic orientation and length of the gypsum-filled vein system of > 2.5 cm (Appendix D, Fig. D.1,2,3) was not present in the primary sample material. These are strong indicators for experimentally induced extension and formation of new gypsum. The wide gypsum-filled vein system formed by linked extensional fractures with a minor shear component that progressively coalesced to result in a stepped shear fracture. (Fig. 5.4).

Additionally, the crystallographic orientation of the vein gypsum is such that poles to {010} generally coincide with the direction of maximum shear stress during the experiments. This geometric link between gypsum growth and stress during an experiment and independent of the surrounding anhydrite has not been described before and requires further discussion.

5.4.2 Evolution and mechanisms of hydration

5.4.2.1 Rapid hydration of anhydrite under stress

A significant outcome of this study is that hydration of anhydrite to gypsum was achieved under non-hydrostatic stress conditions over a few hours. The ssdc experiment Ò2 lasted for six hours and produced gypsum in the fracture-related pore space created during the experiment. Sample $\dot{O}3$ shows a significant amount of new gypsum in veins even after a twenty minute long 'wet' mode experiment.

These results contrast starkly to previous attempts to hydrate anhydrite, which failed to produce gypsum over many months under hydrostatic conditions (e.g., Ramsdell and Patridge, 1929, Leininger et al., 1957; Hardie, 1967). This suggests that there is an intrinsic link (or links) between application of a non-hydrostatic stress field and the rate of the hydration reaction.

5.4.2.2 Spatial distribution and timing relationships between hydration products and fractures

Microstructural observations (Fig. 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6) show a paragenesis that links to the stress-strain evolution. A model to establish the spatial distribution and timing relationships of hydration products and fracture pattern development results from experimental observations was developed (Fig. 5.7).

During elastic stress-strain behaviour, the onset of intra-granular fracturing concentrated in the centre of the core and the orientation of shear planes (30° angle to σ_1) significantly increased sample permeability and provides three-dimensional fracture networks as pathways for fluids (Fig. 5.7a i).

Application of fluid pressure during ssdc and 'wet' mode experiments ensured the fast distribution of $H₂O$ through these networks (Fig. 5.7a ii). At fracture interfaces, the presence of anhydrite, gypsum and H₂O resulted in in situ hydration and gypsum vein formation. $\dot{O}2$ hat six hours of contact with H₂O in total. Five hours and fifty-six minutes under isotropic principal stress conditions (i.e., $\sigma_1 = \sigma_2 = \sigma_3$), and less than two minutes from re-application of strain rate to maximum differential stress (σ_{max}) .

Figure 5.7: Interpretation of fracture formation and fluid distribution in the sample cores throughout triaxial testes. a) Schematic fracture formation. Not all stages apply to all tests, depending on the experimental mode. b) Relation of a) to steady state differential compaction stress-strain curve of sample Ò2.

The gypsum margins and large gypsum clasts contained in the brecciated zone of the shear fractures after ssdc in sample Ò2 exceeded the gypsum formation documented after 'wet' mode experiment in sample Ò3. Combined with the timeline, this larger gypsum content strongly indicates early inter-granular fracturing combined with formation of new gypsum before reaching maximum differential stress.

After maximum differential stress and prior to dynamic hydration brecciation (Fig. 5.7 iii), bulging and (faster) shortening of the sample in the x direction through the activation of shear plane fractures and local extensional operation of a threedimensional fluid pathway network occurred within two minutes.

Shear along main shear fractures results in rapid shortening in x direction during the last stage (Fig. 5.7a iv) and is characterized by a rapid drop of stress (minus \sim 10 MPa every three seconds) with ongoing strain. The onset of such catastrophic failure thirty seconds after maximum differential stress was reached, led to the formation of cataclastic zones and brecciated veins (Fig. 5.6)

5.4.2.3 Crystallographic orientation of newly-formed gypsum

The crystallographic orientations of newly-formed gypsum in the veins have a systematic preferred orientation for long distances along veins, beyond the grain boundaries of wall-rock anhydrite (Fig. 5.5a,b). Gypsum is not always topotactically linked to the wall-rock anhydrite in the immediate vicinity, indicating that inheritance of crystal orientation from anhydrite did not lead to the strong clustering of poles.

There is also no evidence of alignment of crystals with respect to the vein walls, or evidence of gypsum crystals that grew from the vein margin to its centre, and so alignment by competitive crystal growth of gypsum into the vein is unlikely.

Instead, gypsum crystallographic orientations are systematically and preferentially aligned parallel to the direction of maximum shear stress (Fig. 5.5c). This study proposes that inheritance of crystal orientations from wall-rock anhydrite grains combined with crystal orientations favourable for nucleation and growth under the applied stress field (i.e., stress-related minimisation of the energy barrier for nucleation) led to selective crystallographic orientations of large new gypsum grains.

5.4.3 Mechanical-chemical coupling

The spatial link between newly-formed gypsum and fractures shows that hydration predominantly progressed through the fracture network rather than a front that progressed through the sample, similar to that reported for anhydritization (Wang and Wong, 2003; Llana-Fúnez et al., 2012). A concept for the hydration mechanism of anhydrite particles developed by Sievert et al. (2005) involves dissolution and precipitation, which was adapted here to explain hydration of Òdena anhydrite under stress (Fig. 5.8).

The 'wet' mode experiments make $H₂O$ groups available to new mineral interfaces during the initial intra-granular fracturing. Upon the contact of anhydrite surfaces with water, CaSO₄ solution and the surface absorption layer of hydrated Ca²⁺ and SO₄²⁻ ions formed (Fig. 5.8) (Sievert et al., 2005). The increase of thickness of the absorbed layer is reportedly a slow process and needs to be followed by the crack formation in the absorbed layer and counter migration of H_2O and Ca^{2+} as well as SO_4^{2-} ions (Sievert et al., 2005).

Pre-existing gypsum in the samples acted as a natural seeding material, which has been demonstrated elsewhere to enable (or speed up) the hydration reaction process because the kinetically challenging process of forming nuclei (e.g., Hardie, 1967; Wheeler, 1991; Sievert et al., 2005) is skipped. Therefore, hydration was possible as soon as the samples had water contact and more likely in ssdc experiments due to the amount of time of contact with H_2O . However, the importance of this process is difficult to reconcile with the distinct microstructural location of new gypsum (in newly-formed veins), or the lack of gypsum in hydrostatic experiments. Rounded anhydrite inclusions in gypsum margins of shear fractures and as clasts in brecciated veins (Fig. 5.6a) are specific indicators for dissolution of anhydrite.

The role of fractures is threefold: Firstly, they provide new surface area available for reaction. Secondly, they facilitate fluid flow to enable a readily available medium (H_2O) for solution transfer of Ca^{2+} and SO_4^{2-} ions. Thirdly, locally variable stresses associated with fracture propagation give rise to spatial variations in chemical potential and as a consequence, chemical disequilibrium (Llana-Fúnez et al., 2012; Wheeler, 2018).

Figure 5.8: Model for solution – precipitation hydration in Òdena anhydrite based on the hydration mechanism suggested by Sievert et al. (2005). The model includes a spherulite structure, cleavage, and blocky anhydrite areas in contact with water. Initial gypsum is located in veins along grain boundaries and the centre of the spherulite.

Solid-fluid contacts will be at the pressure of the fluids (*Pf*), whilst solid-solid contacts will have a higher average normal stress, depending on the bulk effective pressure and contact area (Llana-Fúnez et al., 2012). That provides different pathways of Ca^{2+} and SO_4^2 ions during the reaction. Therefore, anhydrite solution was preferentially formed in the stressed anhydrite at fracture tips, grain boundaries, and at gypsum-anhydrite contacts. Once gypsum nuclei were established, growth was likely to be rapid, following the findings of Sievert et al. (2005).

The transformation of anhydrite to gypsum requires a significant change in volume of solid material (i. e. swelling). Upon contact with water gypsum is no longer solid but partly dissolved and starts to moderately swell (Fig. 8b). Simultaneously, anhydrite dissolution occurs and transfer of Ca^{2+} and SO_4^{2-} ions and H_2O molecules permeate through the gypsum (Fig. 5.8b,c). The consumption of water acts to lower fluid pressure, whereas replacement of anhydrite by gypsum causes swelling, counteracting decrease in fluid pressure. However, the tests are conducted at constant fluid pressure (held at 10 MPa lower than confining pressure) without any induced fluid flow. Nevertheless, fresh supply of $H₂O$ was facilitated by the opening of a connective network of new intergranular fractures (Fig. 5.7a iii). Fracturing combined with the availability of water for the formation of gypsum facilitate dilatancy, which is seen as bulging of the jacketed sample charges (Fig. 5.7a iii).

Swelling (volume increase) and water loss through H₂O groups being bound into the gypsum impact activity of hydration in places. Swelling can seal up cracks and trap or supersede free water. This potentially stops the hydration reaction in places, while the water migrates into other, harder to reach environments, like grain boundaries, and facilitating hydration there with fewer H_2O groups available.

Cataclastic flow and the full development of major shear fractures (Fig. 5.7a,b, iv) occurred after the peak stress was reached. The 'wet' tests show that these major shear fractures with thin interconnected parallel fractures and areas of wide fractures are all filled with gypsum. These form planar zones of weakness for catastrophic shear failure.

For the phase after peak stress is achieved, De Paola et al. (2009) recorded a rapid increase in permeability that becomes 'chaotic' in the final stage of failure. This is

likely to be coupled with a rapid increase in the area of available reaction surfaces. The macroscopic observations show that the sample cores after experiments with applied fluid pressure, if not failed catastrophically, comprise fragmented debris centimetre to millimetre size, covered with a white slurry. This indicates that rapid gypsum formation may occur during the last, only seconds long stage and upon the failure.

The lower peak stress of $\dot{O}2$ after re-initiation of a strain rate of 9.7 $\cdot 10^{-5}$ s⁻¹ can be explained by the development of weakening zones due to the hydration of gypsum and filling of cracks. Only sample Ò1 failed during ssdc. This could be due to a favourable orientation of pre-existing zones of weakness. There is gypsum in the initial sample, in short (≤ 1 cm) veins with an aperture of ≤ 50 µm. The formation of new gypsum is linked to sample failure.

5.4.3.1 Mechanical strength

A consequence of hydration under stress is the weakening of the mechanical strength during deformation. Samples Ò1,2 that experienced ssdc, have considerably lower peak strength compared to 'wet' and dry runs with the same strain rate of 9.7·10-5 s**-1**. Slower strain rates $(03, 4, 7)$ generate weaker peak strengths.

Besides strain rate, the testing mode has the most significant influence on peak differential stress. Ò8 showed the highest peak differential stress (215 MPa), and 'wet' experiments $\overline{O5,6}$ was intermediate (~ 170 MPa). Sample $\overline{O1}$ fails catastrophically at the beginning of the ssdc phase, the maximum differential stress before failure was \sim 100 MPa, and therefore about 41 % less compared to 'wet' experiments. Ò2 reaches a peak strength (147 MPa) after reapplication of the strain rate. The peak strength of Ò2 is 14 % lower than that of the 'wet' experiments.

The microstructural analysis shows that the new gypsum is located along fractures in extensional and shear orientations, creating planes of weakness, and lowering the mechanical strength. A stronger connected shear fracture network developed until the onset of isotropic principal stress conditions (i.e., $\sigma_1 = \sigma_2 = \sigma_3$) likely caused the more rapidly developed connective fracture network in Ò1 and Ò2. The coalescence of fractures accompanied by hydration in Ò1 occurred within 71 minutes under isotropic confining stress conditions once fluids were introduced.

5.4.4 Wider applicability of the study

Main implication of this study of the crystalline $CaSO₄·H₂O$ system is that mechanicalchemical coupling of deformation and hydration is central to permit hydration and causes significant mechanical weakening.

The stability of natural evaporites is of major interest in various settings, especially in context of underground structures with a variety of purposes. Examples are tunnel construction and monitoring, mining of evaporites, and where evaporitic caverns are temporarily used as storage facilities. In general, rock salt deposits are anything but homogeneous or monomineralic (Stewart, 1963), with gypsum and anhydrite being two of the nine most important and common evaporitic minerals and continuous activity of hydration and dehydration reactions.

Germany and the United States of America are already storing (disposing) repositories with low- and intermediate level nuclear waste in rock salt deposits. The basic assumptions are that rock salt functions as a seal, with halokinesis 'healing' potential leaks. The need for more studies to determine the safety and efficiency of salt deposits, also with the future perspective of permanent disposal of all kinds of materials is widely recognised.

The findings of this study, mechanical-chemical weakening through rapid hydration of anhydrite along fractures, show how rapidly mechanical weaknesses may form and threaten the stability of caverns in natural evaporite deposits. This needs to be included into stability models. Anhydrite-bearing evaporite sequences are often the weakest horizons in sedimentary basins and form detachment horizons in foreland fold and thrust belts (e.g., Heard and Rubey, 1966; Hildyard et al., 2011). Hydration of the anhydrite must further weaken the mechanical strength of such sequences and make the formation of detachment horizons easier.

Findings of this study have implications for hydration in a wide variety geological settings. The $CaSO₄·H₂O$ system could be seen as an analogue for other rock systems that are controlled by hydration, dehydration, and stress, and therefore potentially impacted the mechanical strength of a geologic setting. Common fluid pathways in the Earth include faults, shear zones, and stratigraphic aquifers. This study suggests that hydration along such pathways can be rapid and generate planes of significant weakness in a stressed environment.

Deep crustal earth quakes are often associated with locally weakening of the generally dry, mechanically strong deep crust, through fluid-driven metamorphic reactions (Jamtveit et al., 2019). Studies from the Bergen Arcs is western Norway show that fluid mitigation through shear zones facilitates highly localized eclogitization of anhydrous (granulite) crust along shear zones (e.g., Austrheim and Griffin, 1985; Austrheim, 1987; Jamtveit et al., 1990, Jamtveit et al., 2019) and result in transient mechanical weakening, brittle deformation and earth quakes (e.g., Jamtveit et al., 2019; Bras et al., 2021). At an early stage, eclogite facies mineralogy is even known to be found as veins in extension fractures (Jamtveit et al., 1990).

Subduction of oceanic and continental crusts and active faults (Pérez-Gussinyé and Reston, 2001; Ranero et al., 2003; Bayrakci et al., 2016) transport water even to the deep mantle and create local water rich horizons. Hydration regions surround the three major sites of deep dehydration, the base of the upper mantle, top and bottom of the lower mantle, and slabs in the shallow upper mantle (Ohtani, 2021). Many hydrous minerals such as serpentine, chlorite, and amphibole exist in the crust and slabs descending in the upper mantle. These minerals dehydrate during the descend and release fluids into the overlying mantle (e.g., Mysen 2018, 2019). High-pressure hydrous phases, such as dense hydrous magnesium silicates (DHMS) are stable in the upper mantle and mantle transition zone (Ringwood and Major, 1967).

5.5 Conclusions

This is the first study that looks at the mechanical behaviour and evolution of microstructures linked to hydration in natural samples. Experimental hydration under non-hydrostatic stress conditions was successfully achieved over several hours and evidence for newly-formed gypsum in post experimental 'wet' mode and steady-state differential compaction (ssdc) mode samples was found. Syn-experiment gypsumfilled veins and breccia veins with large gypsum clasts formed in extensional and shear orientations. Significant mechanical weakening of the natural Òdena anhydrite accompanied rapid hydration under non-static stress conditions during ssdc mode experiments. The ssdc results in decreased (\sim 14 to \sim 41 %) peak strength and lower differential stress and strain during failure compared to the 'wet' and dry mode tests. The mechanical-chemical link resulted in failure along gypsum veins after 71 minutes for one sample under ssdc conditions, whereas the other lasted \sim 6 hours in ssdc mode. EBSD analysis shows a selective topotactical link of large gypsum grains to the vein hosting anhydrite. The crystallographic orientations of the gypsum grains in new veins are also selective, systematic, and preferentially aligned parallel to the direction of maximum shear stress during the experiments. A model for the evolution of fracture formation and hydration involving mechanical-chemical coupling is proposed. The insights into rapid hydration under stress provided by this study has wide implications for geological and engineering settings.

CHAPTER 6

THESIS SYNTHESIS

6.1 Summary of thesis results

Each of the four research chapters presented as part of this thesis is investigating one out of four specific objectives that have been formulated in the thesis introduction chapter (see 1.2 Aims and objectives). They serve the main purpose of this thesis, which is to study the link between petrofabrics and seismic anisotropy, and include the quantification of grain boundary patterns, study of evaporite petrofabrics, and experimental hydration of evaporites under stress.

6.1.1 Segment-based grain boundary pattern quantification

Chapter 2 introduces the new MATLABTM toolbox GBPaQ (Grain Boundary Pattern Quantification), which incorporates the semi-automation of a new take on a grain boundary segment intercept (GBSI) based quantification method for grain boundary pattern geometries. GBPaQ also has the option of using grain boundary segment azimuths to quantify for example the preferred orientation of the segments.

The GBSI quantification method was designed with the objective to assess and quantify the influence of grain boundary alignment on acoustic velocity anisotropy in samples with simple and complex patterns with i.e., non-homogeneous and mixed grain shapes. The intention was to create a tool with the capability of fast and simple pattern segment and intercept analysis, with the objective to avoid data simplification, loss, or transformation by, for example, the application of high-level smoothing or fitting ellipses used for strain analysis. The presented methodology also has a broad spectrum of potential applications, as grain boundary pattern quantification is, i.e., important for permeability, deformation mechanisms, and reaction interfaces. The study presents results from semi-automated GBPaQ analysis of two grain boundary patterns.

A new workflow for grain boundary pattern quantification

More complete pattern quantification by combining fitted ellipse, grain boundary segment geometry, and GBSI methods provides the opportunity of analysing more complex patterns than was possible before. The methods complement each other, as each one captures different details of the pattern. The grain boundary segment

geometry statistically analysis the complete grain boundary pattern, via lengthweighted azimuths of each grain boundary segment in a pattern. Spatial relationships (i.e., grain specific grain boundary segments) are lost when plotted as rose diagrams or graph, but this analysis is particularly sensitive to SPOs and other geometrically expressed characteristics. The GBSI method analyses a pattern along scan lines, and therefore provides directional data on grain boundary densities.

SPO 'shapes' as GBSI density contour plots

GBSI density contour roses capture the directional characteristics of a grain boundary pattern and a higher degree of complexity is incorporated. However, the orientations of GBSI density minimum directions (*α*) and maximum directions (*ɣ*) are susceptible to heterogeneities in the grain boundary pattern and scan line positions. GBSI density contour rose plots can display the evolution of a grain boundary pattern throughout progressive deformation. Directional changes of GBSI density dependent on strain geometry and potentially other controlling factors like deformation mechanisms, grain size and grain shape translate well to GBSI density evolution. GBSI density contour rose plots can be integrated in the analysis of acoustic wave velocity anisotropies, as they provide the directional grain boundary density and geometric anisotropy of the grain boundary patterns.

GBSI density-based minimum intensity (*Imin*) curves

Analysis of GBSI data for progressively deformed patterns reveals a new SPO quantification concept for rapid comparison of different, potentially unrelated patterns. The minimum GBSI density divided by the average GBSI density of one grain boundary pattern can be described as minimum intensity, *Imin*, and is a useful parameter to quantify SPO strength. The *Imin* values of GBSI density change systematically with increasing strain. Plotting the evolution of *Imin* versus the axial ratio (long/short axis of the fitted ellipse) as data points shows a general trend that can be best described by a power law relationship. *Imin* has the potential to be refined to develop generalised *Imin* versus *r* diagrams with reference power curve(s) that allows not only to compare samples but also to track sample evolution with ongoing strain, and reconstruct and predict grain shapes, SPOs, and related geometric grain boundary pattern characteristics.

6.1.2 Grain boundary (shape) evolution during deformation

The main objective for chapter 3 was the systematic evaluation of GBPaQ and the GBSI methodology by analysing numerical models with pre-defined characteristics and over simulated deformation. Eight models of foam texture grain patterns generated by viscoplastic numerical simulations and with pre-defined characteristics such as variation of grain size (coarse and fine grained), phase content (single- and two-phase, simple, and complex fabrics), and simple and pure shear strain geometry were run up to a natural strain of 2. This evolution was captured in 100 incremental steps, which were analysed via the introduced grain boundary segment- and GBSI-based workflow using GBPaQ. The study shows sensitivity and value of the GBSI method introduced in chapter 2 for the quantification of the pre-defined characteristics:

The evolution of grain boundary patterns is of interest because grain interfaces host and transmit fluids, are preferred sites where genetic and metamorphic reactions occur, exert first-order control on material strength, and attenuate acoustic seismic waves. Therefore, this study has a broad application across metamorphic petrology, tectonics, structural geology, geophysics, mineral and rock physics and material sciences.

Grain size

Grain size affects the sampling statistics of the GBSI analysis such that the finer the grain size, the clearer the results, therefore results are scalable. All major trends are visible in coarse grained and fine-grained model results.

• Viscosity contrast

The comparison of single- and two-phase simulations shows that phase composition has a strong influence on the grain boundary development, which is recorded by the GBSI method. Dual viscosity (two-phase models) results in the development of shear bands with weaker SPO of each phase, individually and combined, compared to singlephase models that develop a single foliation. Each of the two grain phase populations changes in shape and shape orientation, which proves to be interdependent of each other's distribution (cluster formation) and neighbouring grain contacts.

Shape preferred orientation

The shape preferred orientation (SPO) is stronger in single-phase models compared to two-phase models at any given natural strain > 0.04 , and independent from the endmember strain model. The weaker SPO of two-phase patterns is visible in the GBSI density contour plots by weaker minima and maxima, with higher minimum intensity (*Imin*) compared to single-phase models.

GBSI density-based minimum intensity (*Imin*)

Differences in the *Imin* evolution of all eight models are minimal at low strains and become more pronounced after > 0.2 natural strain, with two-phase models having weaker GBSI density minima and maxima. The pure shear models have a slightly stronger SPO compared to simple shear. GBSI density based *Imin* for the simple shear models is always slightly higher.

Strain geometry

Grain boundary segment-based analysis can differentiate between strain geometries. SPO develops quickly in both, simple and pure shear, after ~ 0.1 natural strain, and evolves in orientation in simple shear, whereas a preferred orientation quickly stabilises in pure shear. This agrees with literature and models of shear zones. Grain boundary segment azimuth roses show different mean orientation evolution depending on the strain geometry. The difference between simple shear and pure shear also effects the shape of the GBSI density contour evolution (orientation and round vs. tipped hourglass).

6.1.3 Acoustic wave velocities in evaporites

It has been recognized that acoustic wave velocity anisotropy in evaporite rocks is not only controlled by crystallographic (preferred) orientation but that other factors like grain boundary alignment, fractures, and mixtures of evaporitic minerals contribute too (e.g., Crampin, 1985; Lo et al.*,* 1986; Popp and Kern, 1998; Raymer and Kendall, 1998; Mah and Schmitt, 2003; Lloyd et al.*,* 2011; Zong et al.*,* 2014).

The fourth chapter of this thesis presents new data that will help in the future to understand how each factor contributes specifically, and their combined influence on seismic wave velocity anisotropy, which is still unknown. The improvement of seismic imaging of evaporites is important for various fields, including oil and gas industry, storage of hydrocarbons, toxic and nuclear waste in rock salt bodies, and engineering and maintenance of buildings and tunnels.

Acoustic wave velocity and microstructural analysis of natural evaporites with halite, polyhalite, anhydrite, gypsum, and mixed phase rocks from three deposits (North Sea, Òdena, and Boulby) demonstrate that natural single and mixed phase evaporites can have significant anisotropic P-wave and S-wave velocity characteristics. These rocks preserve CPOs and SPOs with different strengths and patterns, as well as fractures and veins, which contribute to the measured velocity anisotropy.

Acoustic velocity data for mono- and polymineralic evaporites

New velocity data from natural evaporites with halite, polyhalite, anhydrite, gypsum, and mixed phase rocks from three deposits attests that all samples show velocity anisotropies of up to 60 % AV_P and 34 % AV_S . The V_P and V_S ranges are generally lower than expected from single crystal ranges (that relate to crystallographic orientation), indicating other contributions to velocity variations than simply intrinsic mineralogical anisotropy. Nearly all North Sea and all Òdena quarry samples have very low but in range single crystal end member *VP*.

Crystallographic preferred orientation

Crystallographic preferred orientation (CPO) is present in both analysed sample sets of North Sea anhydrite and Òdena quarry samples containing anhydrite and gypsum. Using multiples of uniform distribution (m.u.d.) and *M*-index as a measure of CPO strength, the maximum strength is a little lower in Òdena quarry samples. The CPO of North Sea anhydrite with point clusters for {100} in the sample X direction means that the direction of measurement (sample X) is parallel to the fast p-wave velocity direction, i.e., the fast direction is normal to bedding in real space. The point orientation data from sample N3-1T for {100} also suggests fast velocities, but closer to the Y-Z plane. The {100} poles of N4-1II suggest medium velocities in the Y-Z plane, as does N4-2T. The Òdena quarry samples have weaker CPOs than the North Sea samples, especially in {100}. In {010}, the clusters of poles are horizontal, which indicates slower velocity directions are in the Y-Z plane for these samples. As S-waves oscillate perpendicular to the direction of wave propagation, the characteristics of the Y-Z plane is also of importance.

Microstructures and grain boundary pattern characteristics

The two sample suites tested show very different microstructures. The North Sea anhydrite samples had a systematic orientation of grain boundaries, caused by a bimodal SPO of lath-shaped grains, with a perpendicular grain shape relationship. The mean grain size ranges between 26.50 ± 31.61 µm and 89.71 ± 57.32 µm, the mean axial ratio between 1.70 ± 0.69 and 2.35 ± 1.29 , and the minimum intensity, introduced for quantification of SPO strength, ranges between 0.8 and 0.6. SPO was not quantified for the Òdena quarry samples. Spherulites are a common geometrical feature of the microstructure in the Òdena quarry samples and typically have a successive change of crystallographic orientation over multiple blades. The spherulitic texture is likely to impact variations of V_S and V_P velocities. The gypsum veins in the Òdena quarry samples have two preferred orientations around 30 to 60° and 120 to 150 \degree to the core Y-direction. As both, V_P and V_S velocities are slower for gypsum compared to anhydrite, gypsum veins with crystallographic or spatial preferred orientations potentially cause velocity anisotropy.

Introduction of a workflow

A more complete microstructural characterisation of evaporites was presented, which includes CPO and automated grain boundary-based SPO quantification that could be used in predictive models of velocity anisotropy. The workflow combines EBSD crystallographic orientation analysis, established fitted ellipse based SPO quantification, basic grain boundary segment orientation statistical analysis, high resolution grain boundary segment intercept density orientation and minimum intensity analysis, and fracture (vein) distribution and orientation analysis. This workflow is a first step to build on in future studies to quantify the impact of petrofabrics on acoustic wave velocity anisotropy.

6.1.4 Rapid hydration and weakening under stress

Chapter 5 studies the effects of non-hydrostatic stress and strain rate on the hydration of polycrystalline anhydrite samples via laboratory triaxial deformation experiments. There is an ongoing discussion about the importance of stress for chemical reactions (e.g., Wheeler, 2018). Chemical reactions and especially hydration reactions are common for rocks under crustal and mantle conditions, where non-hydrostatic stress states are prevalent. Most studies in the CaSO4*H2O system have their focus on the dehydration reaction. There is no other study, where natural anhydrite polycrystalline aggregates were successfully hydrated experimentally, and with focus on microstructure, deformation behaviour, and hydration reaction under stress.

Natural anhydrite samples with gypsum in veins (Òdena quarry samples, see chapter 4) were used for the experiments. Three deformation modes (dry, 'wet', and steady state differential compaction) were chosen, with the strain rate ranging between
$1.0 * 10^{-3}$ s⁻¹ and $9.7 * 10^{-7}$ s⁻¹, confining pressures of 30, 50, or 100 MPa, and fluid pressures of 20, 40, or 90 MPa. Post-experimental microstructural analysis and the mechanical behaviour during the testing showed that new gypsum formed in extensional and shear veins within mere hours and that samples are mechanically weaker.

Evidence for new gypsum and rapid hydration

Post-experiment samples after 'wet' and steady state differential compaction (ssdc) mode tests show increased gypsum content in veins with extensional and shear sections and brecciated veins, consistently oriented in shear fracture orientation. Gypsum clasts in the brecciated veins are orders of magnitude lager than any observed pre-experiment gypsum. Microstructures formed during a 6-hour long experiment with ssdc conditions also show that the gypsum was part of a shear interface with active gypsification before brecciation occurred. Aperture, length, and orientation of gypsum filled veins are strong indicators for experimentally induced extension and formation of new gypsum in under 20 minutes in a sample that underwent a 'wet' mode experiment. Previous studies failed to produce gypsum over months under hydrostatic condition, which suggests an intrinsic relationship between application of a non-hydrostatic stress field and the rate of hydration reaction.

The link of gypsum growth to the stress geometry

The study proposes that inheritance of crystal orientations from wall-rock anhydrite grains combined with crystal orientations favourable for nucleation and growth under the applied stress field led to selective crystallographic orientations of the newlyformed vein gypsum. The crystallographic orientations of newly-formed vein gypsum are systematic, and gypsum is not always topotactically linked to the wall-rock anhydrite. The crystallographic orientation of the vein gypsum is such that poles to {010} coincide with the direction of maximum shear stress during the experiments. This geometric link between gypsum growth and stress during an experiment and independent of the surrounding anhydrite has not been described before.

Mechanical-chemical coupling

The spatial links between newly-formed gypsum and fractures show that hydration predominantly progressed through the fracture network that was created by the experiments. Pre-existing gypsum in the samples acted as a natural seeding material.

Therefore, hydration was possible as soon as the samples had water contact and more likely in ssdc experiments due to the amount of time of contact with $H₂O$.

Solid-fluid contacts will be at the pressure of the fluids (*Pf*), whilst solid-solid contacts will have a higher average normal stress, depending on the bulk effective pressure and contact area (Llana-Fúnez et al., 2012). That provides different pathways of Ca^{2+} and SO_4^2 ions during the reaction. Therefore, anhydrite solution was preferentially formed in the stressed anhydrite at fracture tips, grain boundaries, and at gypsum-anhydrite contacts. Once gypsum nuclei were established, growth was likely to be rapid, following the findings of Sievert et al. (2005).

Cataclastic flow and the full development of major shear fractures (Fig. 5.7a,b, iv) occurred after peak stress was reached during the experiments. The 'wet' tests show that these major shear fractures are all filled with gypsum. These form planar zones of weakness for catastrophic shear failure.

Mechanical strength

A consequence of hydration under stress is the weakening of the mechanical strength during deformation. Samples that experienced ssdc have lower peak strength compared to 'wet' and dry runs with the same strain rate. One sample failed catastrophically at the beginning of the ssdc phase, with a maximum differential stress that was 41 % less compared to 'wet' experiments. The other ssdc test reached a peak strength that was 14 % lower than that of the 'wet' experiments. The microstructural analysis shows that the new gypsum is located along fractures in extensional and shear orientations, creating planes of weakness, and lowering the mechanical strength.

6.2 Outlook

There three main future directions this thesis leads to. First, there are the advances for the quantification of boundary-based microstructures with implications for studying the links between deformation mechanisms or chemical reactions and other aspects to grain boundary patterns. Secondly, the development towards a basic understanding, including factor-by-factor quantification, of the impacts of petrofabrics on seismic velocity anisotropy and subsequently the improvement of seismic imaging of evaporites. And finally, insights of the role and processes connected to chemical reactions in stressed environments, which are also of major importance for

understanding the seismic characteristics of evaporitic bodies, where hydration and dehydration reactions are key for mineral composition, mechanical behaviour, and structural characteristics.

There are several future directions that the introduction of GBPaQ (chapter 2) leads to: further development of GBPaQ as an accessible and useful toolbox, application of the GBSI-based method including *Imin* and *Imin* curves, implementation of smoothing functions, study of the potential of GBSI density-based analysis to trace deformation evolution and mechanisms (chapter 3), the link to quantification of the impact of grain boundary patterns on acoustic velocity anisotropy (and ultimately seismic velocity anisotropy), and the application to natural sample sets (chapter 4).

Future studies based on the findings of chapter 3 should include numerical simulations with different parameter space to further evaluate the abilities, strengths and weaknesses of the workflow, a variety of natural samples with corresponding parameter space to undertake the transition from models to natural samples and upscaling of GBSI density to 3D models of SPOs.

The study presented in chapter 4 adds to the currently small database on acoustic velocity measurements of textural and mineralogical complex evaporites. However, a direct quantification of the impact of petrofabrics on acoustic wave velocity requires a systematic study of evaporitic samples of a wide variety, and the means to quantify and compare their characteristics with a customized, highly developed workflow. The presented results are part of the basis for such research.

The following twelve specific directions for future research are a natural continuation of the research presented in this thesis.

6.2.1 Development of GBPaQ

The toolbox GBPaQ needs to be further developed in regards of the addition of flexibility for pattern analysis, such as variation of scan line positioning from radial analysis to grid analysis. Currently, only one central scan line rotation centre is projected on the pattern. Supplementary functions that might be of value are a) adjustable grid points for positioning multiple scan line centres, and b) scan line grids with adjustable distance and number of parallel lines with selected angles. Analysis should be either accumulative, summarising GBSI density from all scan lines with one

direction, or spatial, showing the GBSI density evolution throughout the pattern from scan line to scan line.

6.2.2 Quantification of the deformation evolution of grain boundary patterns

Analysis of a variation of patterns with different characteristics and throughout deformation is necessary to fully understand the potential of this method. Chapter 3 of this thesis includes such a study.

6.2.3 Implementation of GBSI data in seismic velocity studies

Next to CPO in a polycrystalline medium, grain boundary density, and thus SPO, is considered as another impedance factor on velocity anisotropy. Ultrasonic wave velocity is measured via sending an acoustic signal (wave) from a pulse generator to a receiver through a sample body. For anisotropy measurements on cuboids, the wave velocity is measured along the three principal orthogonal X-Y-Z directions to assess the grain scale affects that contribute to the total anisotropy. A 3D volume representing the GBSI density is potentially comparable to ultrasonic velocity anisotropy plotted as 3D surfaces (AnisoVis results). Future objective is to generate a GBSI density toroid from orthogonal data of a natural sample with SPO to study a) the feasibility, b) compare results with the concept model, and b) attempt to combine it with results from acoustic velocity anisotropy measurements and CPO data.

6.2.4 Expansion of parameter space of numerical simulations

Testing the response of the GBSI method to quantify different deformation mechanisms and parameters, i.e., dislocation climb, grain boundary migration, etc. via tracing the evolution of simulated pattern deformation might lead to an innovative workflow that is capable to quantify those mechanisms and parameters in real samples. For example, recrystallisation dominated by subgrain rotation or grain boundary migration has major impact on the grain size, and grain boundary geometry evolution. As such, a refined grain boundary segment intercept density method, including GBSI density *Imin* analysis, and GBSI density contour rose evolution has the potential to impact a broader community that is interested in grain boundary pattern quantification.

6.2.5 Analysis of natural samples with GBPaQ

Samples from simple shear and pure shear zones, with multiple phases (i.e., gneiss) or a single phase (i.e., deformed rock salt) can be analysed via GBPaQ and a workflow that includes the determination of a mean grain axial ratio with standard deviation.

Plotted on an axial ratio versus *Imin* diagram with standardised curves it can transition to reconstruction of the shear zone and to determination of strain. Results of a first attempt with natural samples are presented in chapter 4.

6.2.6 Microstructural link to acoustic velocity anisotropy in cuboid samples

Microstructural analysis of the five studied cuboid samples is necessary to quantify their microstructures and CPO. The study shows that one sample of halite mixed with clay has a P-wave velocity anisotropy as high as 60 % *AVP*, whereas another pure halite sample ranges to 4 % *AV_P*. The presented analysis is not sufficient to understand these differences and further characterisation should provide valuable data. Nearly all North Sea and all Òdena quarry samples have very low but in range single crystal end member V_P means that both types of rocks possibly have either: a strong CPO in a slow *VP* crystal orientation, which means the CPO over all samples is very similar; or the sample suite contains other characteristics that lower the velocities. The former idea could be tested by a 'rock recipe' approach (Lloyd et al., 2011), or alternative approaches for the estimation of velocity anisotropy from CPOs (Zhong et al., 2014; Vel et al., 2016).

6.2.7 Sample material for future research

A variety of evaporite samples with a range of different petrofabrics is necessary to systematically study how each extrinsic and intrinsic parameters ultimately influence seismic velocity anisotropy. Key is to detect and control CPO, as it is assumed to be the main contributor. A future objective is to use pure constriction deformation experiments to create strong CPO and SPO. For example, 'dry' halite cuboids at relatively low temperatures (~175 °C), strain rates of $2 * 10^{-7}$ s⁻¹ and finite strain of > 40 % should deform via subgrain rotation recrystallisation and result in strong CPO (e.g., Trimby et al., 2000). Relatively higher temperatures (~350 °C), a strain rate of $2 * 10^{-7}$ s⁻¹, and a final strain of 25 %, should deform halite samples via dislocation creep of edge dislocation and fluid assisted grain boundary migration. Such conditions allow the formation and development of strong SPO. Next to experimental control, the preparation of synthetic samples with distinct grain size, phase content and distribution (i.e., foliation) is another option to quantify the impact of such characteristics on acoustic wave velocity anisotropy.

6.2.8 Complete evaluation of V_P **and** V_S **anisotropy**

The workflow for grain boundary pattern quantification developed in chapters 2 and 3 that incorporates GBSI density analysis has the potential to lead to 3D GBSI density models (Fig. 6.1). Such models should be comparable to stereographic projections of compressional velocity (*VP*), shear-wave splitting (*AVS*) and polarisation of the fast shear wave velocity (V_{SI}) , calculated using EBSD-derived CPO and stiffness matrix coefficients and densities of single crystals (after Mainprice, 1990).

Naturally, the next step is the quantification of grain boundary SPO from three orthogonal faces from natural evaporite samples to develop 3D grain boundary distribution models that could be used for acoustic wave attenuation calculations. A rigorous combination of 3D grain boundary distribution with CPO information and crack tensors from natural samples provides the workflow for a complete evaluation of *VP* and *VS* anisotropy.

6.2.9 Upscaling to 3D GBSI density SPO

Most studies of real rocks and other aggregates use three orthogonal sections to model 3D sample characteristics, with only few being able to measure directly in 3D (i.e., Micro-CT). GBSI density-based analysis in 3D has not yet been attempted.

Nevertheless, it can be predicted that 3D GBSI density analysis of grain boundary patterns with simple foliation hypothetically leads to the shape of quasi-toroidal (horn torus), orthorhombic symmetry 3D GBSI density plots (Fig. 6.1). No SPO or very weak SPOs should result in a shape that is close to a sphere. Grains (particles) that form a SPO possibly are equidimensional in two orthogonal directions (uniform flattening or extension).

Uniform flattening $(X=Y>>Z)$ results in a 3D shape of a sphere with a 'neck'. In case of uniform extension $(X \geq Y = Z)$, the sphere develops a symmetric funnel in the centre (horn torus). When the grains (particles) are not equidimensional (plane strain, X>Y>Z), the sphere not only forms funnels but also becomes increasingly elliptical with increasing strain (SPO), with the longest dimension representing the maximum GBSI density orientation (*γ*) (Fig. 6.1c,d).

Figure 6.1: Concept model of how GBSI density of what a single foliation SPO is likely to look in 3D, based on a set of three hypothetical, orthogonal GBSI density contours. a) Sketch of three orthogonal surfaces of a sample with simplified SPO, and orientation of a single representative 'particle'. Surfaces and 'particle' are both placed relative to

principal orientations X,Y,Z. *α* **is the minimum, and** *γ* **the maximum GBSI density orientation. b) Model GBSI density contour roses of the three orthogonal planes (XY, XZ, and ZY). c) GBSI density contours merged relative to their orientation to each other in 3D. d) Full shape of the horn torus representing the 3D SPO GBSI density.**

6.2.10 Analysis of post-experimental microstructures in Zechstein anhydrite

The absence of thin section material and therefore missing microstructural analysis led to chapter 4 including data from only one out of two sample sets. This strongly suggests to continue by analysing the missing Zechstein anhydrite sample set and comparing the outcomes to the presented data.

The mechanical behaviour and observations from the post-experiment pure Zechstein anhydrite samples already show local loss of cohesion in one steady state differential compaction (ssdc) mode test. Intense shear fracturing and expulsion of an off-white slurry were also observed after a 'wet' mode test on Zechstein anhydrite. Clarification of the presence or absence of newly-formed gypsum in the Zechstein anhydrite samples after triaxial tests with water present has not been obtained yet.

6.2.11 Anhydrite hydration and acoustic velocity

The influence of fracturing and hydration in anhydrite on acoustic wave velocity could potentially be measured in situ with special equipment for the high-pressure, hightemperature (HP/HT) triaxial rock deformation apparatus (TRI-X 250 MPa/200 °C) from Sanchez Technologies. Further, such results could then be compared with those on acoustic wave velocity and velocity anisotropy of natural evaporites presented in chapter 4 of this thesis. This also leads to testing whether slower-than expected V_P and *VS* in anhydrite is impacted by the presence of hydrated phases along grain and fracture interfaces. Therefore, quantifying the microstructural differences between the North Sea samples and combining the results with those of the three Òdena quarry samples, with emphasis on variation of mineral content, is crucial to evaluate if and how other factors like SPO, mineral content and fractures impact the velocity and velocity anisotropy.

6.2.12 Experiments on anhydrite hydration at different deformation conditions

Further experimental data about the impact of stress on hydration rate in the CaSO4·H2O system will provide more details about the conditions (i.e., temperature, pressure, strain rate, deformation regime) hydration is active under, the hydration

mechanisms, the role of fractures, mineral content, and mechanical strength. Triaxial deformation experiments under conditions in favour of ductile anhydrite deformation including a 'wet' mode and a ssdc mode could be tested. De Paola et al. (2009) found that ductile deformation of anhydrite was achieved in experiments at room temperature, a strain rate of $9 * 10^{-8}$ s⁻¹, 100 MPa confining pressure, and fluid pressure of 40 MPa (effective pressures \leq 20 MPa) at grain sizes of 10 μ m to 1 mm. Evidence for hydration of anhydrite was not found. A form of gypsum seeding, or the use of reaction enhancing cation activators ($K^+ \ge Na^+ \ge NH_4^+ > Mg^{++} > Fe^{++} > H^+ >$ $Al^{+++} > Ca^{++}$; Leininger et al., 1957) in the hydrating fluid and long fluid exposure time could potentially activate and accelerate the hydration reaction.

6.3 Conclusions

Evaporites and their unique characteristics play a key role in several fields of geoscientific research and are strongly connected to engineering challenges, the emerging energy crisis caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and the developments in the oil and gas industry. The improvement of seismic imaging is strongly connected to understanding evaporitic bodies in terms of their inhomogeneous structure, composition, and complex dynamic evolution.

The main objective of this thesis was to study the link between petrofabrics and seismic anisotropy, with focus on the quantification of grain boundary pattern geometry, evaporite petrofabrics and experimental hydration of anhydrite to gypsum under stress. This thesis consists of four scientific chapters, that each focus on specific aspects of the overall objective. These chapters are written as independent manuscripts and are in preparation for publication. The achievements of this thesis include:

A) The presentation of a new, semi-automated toolbox of MATLABTM scripts, named Grain Boundary Pattern Quantification (GBPaQ). GBPaQ incorporates a grain boundary geometry quantification method based on segment intercepts (GBSI method; chapter 2) for more detailed pattern quantification and directional characterisation of grain boundary networks.

B) Testing of this semi-automated approach for grain boundary pattern evolution assessment on numerical models of single- and two-phase materials that underwent simulated deformation via dislocation glide in simple and pure shear (chapter 3) with the results that show significant differences for each of the tested models.

C) The presentation of new data for the investigation of the links between petrofabrics and velocity anisotropy in natural evaporitic samples with variations of mineral content, and texture (chapter 4). Effective combination of ultrasonic velocity measurements, crystallographic preferred orientation analysis and the proposed quantification approach for grain boundary pattern geometry.

D) Reports of the first successful hydration of natural anhydrite rocks to gypsum under non-hydrostatic stress conditions, achieved over several hours, and using triaxial deformation experiments (chapter 5). Complex links among mechanical-chemical coupling, microstructure, and the spatial distribution and timing are revealed.

The studies presented in this PhD thesis lay the ground works for future research in several scientific directions. The potential of the application of the semi-automated GBSI quantification methodology to grain boundary pattern quantification for rocks and crystalline materials is promising, and will benefit from future improvements. Studying a broader variety of evolving numerical models with GBPaQ and including grain boundary segment intercept-based quantification methods will further develop how we look at grain boundary networks and deformation mechanisms. The impact of petrofabrics on seismic velocity in evaporites is still not fully understood, and studying a larger, more diverse dataset of evaporitic rocks is required to cover the full range of naturally occurring petrofabrics in rock salt. The role of stress on chemical reactions like hydration is a greatly discussed field of research, yet little experimental data is published and there is much potential for further projects.

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APPENDIX A

Supplementary material to chapter 2

A.1 Figures

Figure A.1: Graphical summary of grain-based quantification methods after Fossen (2016), who modified from Ramsay and Huber (1983). a) *Rf* **/***ϕ* **method. The ellipses have the same ellipticity** (R_i) **before deformation starts. The** R_f/ϕ **diagram to the right indicates that** $R_i = 2$ **.** A pure shear is then added with $R_s = 1.5$, followed by a pure shear strain of R_s = 3. b) Result of a manually performed Fry analysis, showing the strain ellipsoid **defined by a void between data points. Figure after Fossen (2016), who modified from Ramsay and Huber (1983). c) Centre-to-centre distance analysis for DTNNM, after Delaunay triangulation and lines connected to points on the convex hull are omitted. After Mulchrone (2003) and d) Plot of data from modified Delaunay triangulation (Fig. 2.1c) after normalisation. After Mulchrone (2003).**

Figure A.2: Graphic summary of grain boundary-based quantification methods. I Projection method (Panozzo, 1983). Projection of an ellipse that is approximated by eight straight-line segments: $\alpha_i = 30^\circ$; $\alpha = 0^\circ$, total projection, A(α), and simple projection. B(α)

are shown schematically. a and b = axes of ellipse: 1 ... 8 = digitized points; x min and x max = minimum and maximum x-coordinates of ellipse. After Panozzo (1984). II Inverse SURFOR techniques by Panozzo (1987). a) Inverse SURFOR wheel and b) outlines of grain boundaries in a quartzite (after Fig. 7.16, p. 118 of Ramsay and Huber, 1983); x' = reference direction = centre and c) analysis of the grain boundaries shown in (b); plot of number of intercepts, n' versus orientation, *ϕ'***; dashed line = curve fitted through points. After Panozzo (1987). III Intercept method from Launeau and Robin (1996). Counting** grid at a) α = 145° on a grey shaded object of a phase X. Analysis points are represented **by open when they fall outside the object, and filled dots when they fall in. The number of intercepts** N_I **on a line** *j***,** $N_I(i, \alpha)$ **, is the number of times, in boxes, a cursor migrating along that line moves out of phase X. For several equally spaced lines parallel to a direction α, the total number of intercepts is** *N1(α).* **b) Rose of intercept counts,** *N1(α),* **plot from 0 and 360°. c) The number of analysis points falling into a phase X divided by the number of intercepts along a line** *j, N₁***(***j,α)***, gives the mean intercept length** $L(i, a)$ **. After Launeau et al***.* **(2010). V Cantor-dust method (Volland and Kruhl, 2004) applied to the holes of a Sierpinski carpet. a) In 1° rotation steps a set of parallel scan lines superimposed on the pattern. Inside a circular region of interest segments of each scan line that cover the structure are emphasized. b) Number of segments with lengths is plotted cumulatively against segment length s on a log-log diagram. The black line indicates the corresponding linear regression line with slope m. Dataset from 27 scan lines at 133°. After Gerik and Kruhl (2009).**

Figure A.3: Initial grain boundary pattern for the analysis of a microstructure with round grains, called 'Granular' during the case studies.

Figure A.4: Backscatter electron image of the polycrystalline foam texture of a zirconia ceramic sample, providing the initial grain boundary pattern for the 'Foam' pattern case study is shown in A. Manual grain boundary tracing with a vector graphics program of the backscatter electron image provided the grain boundary map B.

A.2 Tables

Table A.1: Software tools that quantify preferred orientation (anisotropy) of particles and grain boundary networks. A full overview is exceeding the frame of this literature review. Therefore, the most topic relevant and popular tools are included in the table.

Table A.2: List of main publications that focus on reviewing pattern quantification methods.

A.3 Computer Code availability

Name of code: GBPaQ Developer: David Healy, Johanna Heeb, Nicholas E. Timms, Enrique Gómez-Rivas E-Mail: d.healy@abdn.ac.uk Year first available: 2021 Software required: MATLAB 2020 Program language: MATLAB Program size: 767 MB Source code: https://github.com/DaveHealy-github/GBPaQ

A.4 Supplementary Data

Supplementary data to this chapter can be also found online at:

https://studentcurtinedu-

my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/19246301_student_curtin_edu_au/EkOz1fYdIF9Dgsa2S0bK7kEBu piKJQ8P5rgQU7Y7mWCJLw?e=dnIS3h

APPENDIX B

Supplementary material to chapter 3

B.1 Figures

Α. Coarse-grained

Figure B.1: Grain area histograms for A. coarse-grained, and B. fine-grained single- and two-phase viscosity simple shear models (1:1) at time step 0, based on grain boundary pattern characteristics exported from ELLE.

Figure B.2: Phase boundary GBPaQ GBSI density analysis for all basic two-phase models. a) Shows the results for coarse-grained simple shear, b) the results for the coarsegrained pure shear, c) the results for fine-grained simple shear, and d) the results for the fine-grained pure shear initial phase boundary pattern. One central radial scan line centre, with 0.5° angles between scan lines was used for analysis. The GBSI density (per pixel) is plotted against scan line orientation as blue contours. The average grain boundary intercept density $(\bar{x}N_L(\theta))$ **from all scan lines is plotted as red circles. The location of minimum GBSI density scan line is marked as α.**

Figure B.3: Pattern statistics for all models, based on ELLE output and calculated as relative fraction of time step 0 and plotted against natural strain ε_n **. A. is the axial ratio, B. is the total grain number and C. is the second moment grain size.**

Figure B.4: Evolution of the coarse-grained, simple shear single- and two-phase grain boundary models. The maps show the sample patterns every nine time steps, equivalent to an increase of natural strain of 0.18 % for each step. White are the low viscosity grains and grey are the high viscosity grains in the dual viscosity model. The same 5 grains are tracked throughout the two models. For all models the *x***-axis is oriented horizontal, while the** *y***-axis is vertical.**

Figure B.5: Grain boundary segment angle orientation rose plots (equal area, lengthweighted) of segments intercepted along a) maximum (*ɣ***) and b) minimum (***α***) GBSI** density scan lines at natural strains (ε_n) of 0, 1 and 2 (time steps 0, 50 and 100) of the fine**grained strain models. Each plot contains the orientation of the scan line that intercepted the plotted data. Angle values are listed in table 3.3 (Chapter 3).** *S* **is the number of grain boundary segments analysed.**

The analysis of the grain boundary segment characteristics intercepted along *α* and *ɣ* of the fine-grained models by single scan lines (Fig. B.5) shows differences between *α* and *ɣ*, as well as between simple shear and pure shear models. For *ɣ* (Fig. B.5a), the intercepted segments at the initial time step are mostly randomly oriented, with gaps around *ɣ*, where segments are almost parallel and thus, intercepts unlikely or not possible.

Most segments intercepted along *α* (Fig. B.5b) at the initial time step are accumulated over a range of 30° to 40°, with a 30° gap around *α*. In general, the intercepted grain boundary segments along *ɣ* are more random in terms of their orientation and intensity, which is inversed rapidly towards medium natural strains, where strongly preferred segment orientations develop.

At a natural strain of 1, the angles and lengths of grain boundary segments intercepted along γ form strong perpendicular high intensity bin clusters relative to γ . The same trend of grain boundary segment re-orientation can be observed for α, with the difference that the bins range around *α* but are still distributed over a wider range with more bins with medium and high intensities.

At the finite natural strain of 2, the intercepted grain boundary segments generally have less variety in orientation, with main peaks perpendicular to *ɣ* and parallel to *α*. In most cases of two-phase models, the intercepted grain boundary segments are oriented slightly more randomly, covering a greater range of segment angles.

Table B.1 shows that the angle between *ɣ* and *α* (*ɸ*) is never exactly 90°. Only the finegrained pure shear single-phase comes close with $\phi = 91.5^{\circ}$. Most other models are off by $\sim 10^{\circ}$, except for the pure shear model at the initial stage ($\phi = 46^{\circ}$) and the pure shear single-phase at a natural strain of 1 (ϕ = 73.5°).

Figure B.6: Evolution of phase boundary segment azimuths of coarse-grained two-phase simple shear and pure shear models. a) Equal area, length-weighted phase boundary segment azimuth rose plots at natural strains (ε_n) of 0.6, 1.2 and 1.8 (time steps 30, 60 **and 90).** *S* **is the number of segments analysed. b) Contoured rose plots of phase boundary segment intercept density per pixel plotted against scan line orientation (***θ***) for the same natural strains in a). One central radial scan line centre, with 0.5° angles between scan lines was used for analysis. The location of minimum GBSI density scan line is marked as α. c) Phase boundary pattern of the simple shear fine-grained twophase model at a natural strain of 1.8.**

Figure B.7: GBSI density minimum intensity I_{min} **versus natural strain** ε_n **diagrams. The four coarse-grained, simple shear and pure shear, single- and two-phased datasets presented as points in A. and as curves in A.i). The four fine-grained, simple and pure shear, single- and two-phase datasets presented as points in B. and as curves in B.i). Corresponding values are listed in Tables B.1 to B.8.**

B.2 Tables

Table B.1: Segment orientation angle $[°]$ of γ , α and ϕ for three time steps of the fine**grained models. Addition to Figure 3.5 and 3.6.**

Table B.2: GBPaQ analysis results (*dβ* **= 0.5° = angular intervals between scan lines).** *Step* **is the time step;** *NL(α)* **is the minimum GBSI density per pixel;** *α* **is the angle of the scan line with the minimum number of grain boundary segment intercepts** (a) **;** $N_L(y)$ **is** the maximum GBSI density per pixel; γ is the angle of the scan line with the maximum **number of grain boundary segment intercepts** (γ) ; $\overline{x}N_L(\theta)$ is the mean number of grain **boundary segment intercepts per scan line.** *Imin* **is the minimum intensity.**

Step	$N_L(\alpha)$ [px]	α [°]	$N_L(y)$ [px]	Y[°]	$\bar{x}N_L(\theta)$ [px]	I_{min}
$\mathbf{0}$	13.689	32	23.166	38.5	17.5169	0.781474
1	13.422	31.5	22.7146	37.5	17.4534	0.769019
\overline{c}	13.1585	9.5	24.2926	37.5	17.4305	0.754912
3	12.9129	9.5	23.8391	37.5	17.4964	0.738032
$\overline{\mathbf{4}}$	13.6408	8.5	23.3842	89	17.5246	0.77838
5	12.4168	8.5	23.8785	96.5	17.59	0.705901
6	12.1688	8	22.4655	33	17.597	0.691527
$\boldsymbol{7}$	12.8383	7.5	23.8426	62	17.7096	0.724934
8	11.6918	7.5	24.283	61	17.9275	0.652171
9	11.4666	7	24.6972	97.5	18.0593	0.634942
10	11.2424	τ	25.0791	83	18.1164	0.620565
11	11.0209	6.5	25.4329	32.5	18.341	0.600889
12	10.8041	6.5	26.5946	32	18.4313	0.586182
13	10.5915	6	26.0715	32	18.5569	0.570758
14	10.3829	6	27.1553	31.5	18.763	0.553371
15	10.1781	5.5	26.6197	78	18.8827	0.539017
16	9.9772	5.5	28.3966	77.5	19.0485	0.523779
17	9.7797	5	28.5868	77	19.1932	0.50954
18	9.8432	5	29.5295	102	19.4259	0.506705
19	9.2715	5.5	29.3596	76	19.5963	0.473125
20	8.6726	5	29.9599	75.5	19.8373	0.437187
21	8.8492	4.5	31.3744	75	19.9813	0.442874
22	9.0297	4.5	32.0145	74.5	20.1988	0.447041
23	9.215	$\overline{4}$	31.8335	73.5	20.4958	0.449604
24	8.5472	177	32.4794	73	20.8358	0.410217
25	8.7217	5.5	33.1426	72.5	21.1112	0.413131
26	8.0102	177	33.8207	71.5	21.4197	0.373964
27	8.1732	177	34.5092	71	21.7046	0.376565
28	7.4135	179	35.2142	75.5	22	0.336778
29	7.5649	$\boldsymbol{0}$	35.9334	72	22.2935	0.339332
30	7.7192	$\boldsymbol{0}$	36.666	72.5	22.6034	0.341506
31	7.8765	$\mathbf{0}$	36.4289	68	22.9222	0.343619
32	7.0327	178.5	37.1728	67	23.3067	0.301746
33	7.1763	178.5	38.9569	72.5	23.6034	0.304037
34	7.3229	$\boldsymbol{0}$	39.7528	72	23.9478	0.305786
35	7.4721	$\boldsymbol{0}$	39.4951	92.5	24.2431	0.308216
36	7.6246	$\boldsymbol{0}$	41.3906	93	24.6262	0.309613
37	7.7802	$\boldsymbol{0}$	42.2351	93	25.0177	0.310988
38	6.8047	$\mathbf{0}$	43.0965	93	25.3816	0.268096
39	6.9436	$\boldsymbol{0}$	43.9759	93	25.0864	0.276787
40	7.0853	$\mathbf{0}$	43.6924	93	26.225	0.270173
41	6.0249	176	44.5841	93	26.73	0.225398

I) Coarse-grained, pure shear, single-phase model

II) Coarse-grained, simple shear, single-phase model.

III) Coarse-grained, pure shear, two-phase model.

IV) Coarse-grained, simple shear, two-phase model.

V) Fine-grained, pure shear, single-phase model.

VI) Fine-grained, simple shear, single-phase model.

VII) Fine-grained, pure shear, two-phase model.

VIII) Fine-grained, simple shear, two-phase model.

APPENDIX C

Supplementary material to chapter 4

C.1 Figures

Figure C.1: Twin sample cores of North Sea (Zechstein) anhydrite.

Figure C.3: Reflected light microscopy of thin section of Zechstein anhydrite sample N2- 1T. Orientation: view on the Y,Z – Y,Z plane and perpendicular orientation to X direction (long core axis).

Zechstein Anhydrite BSE SE Images Summary

 $Im1; N2-1T$

500 µm; WD 18.81 mm

■ 250 µm; WD 10.4 mm

 $Im4; N4-111$

■ 100 µm; WD 10.2 mm

Im5; N4-2T

 $Im3; N4-111$

100 µm; WD 11.0 mm

Figure C.4: Backscatter electron (BSE) images of pure anhydrite North Sea (Zechstein) anhydrite sample material. Orientation of Im1 and 5: view on the Y,Z – Y,Z plane and perpendicular orientation to X direction (long core axis). Orientation of Im2,3, and 4: X is horizontal.

1 mm

AA-4T Microscopy Summary

Im1 ppl

 $Im4$ xpl

Im₂ ppl

 $Im₅$ xpl

Im3 ppl

Im6 xpl

Figure C.5: Microscopic images of Òdena quarry sample material with spherulites and clay inclusions. Orientation: view on the Y,Z – Y,Z plane and perpendicular orientation to X direction (long core axis).

BA-8 II BSE SE Images Summary

20 µm; WD 10.8 mm

Figure C.6: Backscatter electron images of unpolished Òdena quarry sample material, Thin section BA-8II. Light grey: anhydrite, medium grey: gypsum, and dark grey: dolomite. Orientation: X direction is horizontal (long core axis).

BA-8 II EDS Spectra Summary

Figure C.7: EDS spectra of Òdena quarry sample material. Three main peaks in spectrum 1 (anhydrite): O with ~ 85 cps/eV, S with ~ 162 cps/eV, and Ca with ~ 100 **cps/eV. Spectrum 2 (gypsum): O with ~ 115 cps/eV, S with ~ 124 cps/eV, and Ca with ~ 78 cps/eV.**

Figure C.8: Microstructural analysis of sample N2-1T, on a thin section with perpendicular orientation to X direction (long core axis). a) Crystallographic orientation map, with i) including low angle boundaries > 2° in yellow and grain boundaries (> 10°) in black (full map in Appendix C, Fig. C.6), b) grain size map, c) grain shape map, d) shape preferred orientation map. a) to d) are based on EBSD analysis. e) Grain boundary trace map, based on manual tracing of BSE and crystallographic orientation map. *S* **is the number of trace segments of the map. f) Grain boundary segment orientation map, based on e) and analysed via GBPaQ.**

Figure C.9: Crystallographic and shape preferred orientation analysis of sample N2-1T, based on the maps shown in Fig. C.8. a) Crystallographic orientation pole figures for anhydrite based on EBSD data. b) Fitted ellipse analysis of EBSD data, i) grain size histogram and ii) rose diagram of the long axes angles of fitted ellipses. c) Fitted ellipse analysis of trace map data (161,394 segments), i) grain size histogram and ii) rose diagram of the long axes angles of fitted ellipses. d) Equal area, length-weighted grain boundary segment orientation rose of the trace map, resulting from GBPaQ analysis. e)

GBSI density rose plot from GBPaQ analysis. The angle between scan lines is 0.5°. *α* is **the minimum GBSI density (scan line) angle.** *ɣ* **is the maximum GBSI density (scan line)** angle. $\bar{x}N_L(\theta)$ is the average GBSI density, in GBSI per pixel.

The distinctive low magnitude peaks in 90° and 180° orientation are biased by artefacts from manual tracing. Segment traces with vertical and horizontal orientation were actively avoided during manual tracing for sample N2-1T (Fig. C.8,9 and N4-1II (Fig. C.13,14). As a consequence, the neighbouring bins contain segments that belong to these bins.

Based on the number of traced segments, the low probability to create segments with >10**°** deviation, and the nature of the fabric, minimum bins in 90° and 180° orientation are not unlikely. Additionally, only the vertical and horizontal bins, and their direct neighbours are impacted. The angle between scan lines of 0.5° used for GBSI density measurements does not allow of a huge impact of the biased tracing on the overall shape of the GBSI density rose. The orientation of minimum density is most likely effected, while several other minimum densities implicate that minimum intensity is only slightly lower due to the bias. In case of the N2-1T dataset (Fig. C.9e) another low GBSI density orientation is oriented $\sim 150^{\circ}$, which would be more consistent with the results from Fig. C.9b,c,d.

The bias was does not apply to the trace mapping of the other samples (N3-1T and N4-2II) used in this study, as the tracing procedure was changed.

$$
x \xrightarrow{\uparrow} y, z
$$

Figure C.8: Backscatter electron (BSE) images of the frames that build the crystallographic orientation map of N2-1 (Fig. C.9).

Figure C.10: Crystallographic orientation analysis of sample N2-1 (perpendicular to x axis of the core). a) Crystallographic orientation map with grain boundaries (>10° misorientation) in black, twin boundaries (83.5° / [100]) in red, and subgrain boundaries (2-10° misorientation) in yellow. b) Misorientation angle distribution.

1 mm; 5 µm step

Figure C.11: Secondary electron (SE) image of the crystallographic orientation map of N3-1 (Fig. C.12).

Figure C.12: Crystallographic orientation analysis of sample N3-1 (perpendicular to x axis of the core). a) Crystallographic orientation map with grain boundaries (>10° misorientation) in black, twin boundaries (83.5° / [100]) in red, and subgrain boundaries (2-10° misorientation) in yellow. b) Misorientation angle distribution.

Figure C.13: Microstructural analysis of sample N4-1II, on a thin section with parallel orientation to X direction (long core axis). a) Crystallographic orientation map, with i) including low angle boundaries > 2° in yellow and grain boundaries (> 10°) in black (full map in Appendix C, Fig. C.15), b) grain size map, c) grain shape map, d) shape preferred orientation map. a) to d) are based on EBSD analysis. e) Grain boundary trace map, based on manual tracing of BSE and crystallographic orientation map. *S* **is the number of trace segments of the map. f) Grain boundary segment orientation map, based on e) and analysed via GBPaQ.**

Figure C.14: Crystallographic and shape preferred orientation analysis of sample N4- 1II, based on the map shown in Fig. C.13. a) Crystallographic orientation pole figures for anhydrite. b) Fitted ellipse analysis of EBSD data, i grain size histogram and ii rose diagram of the long axes angles of fitted ellipses. c) Fitted ellipse analysis of trace map data (31,568 segments), i grain size histogram and ii rose diagram of the long axes angles of fitted ellipses. d) Equal area, length-weighted grain boundary segment orientation rose of the trace map from GBPaQ analysis. e) GBSI density rose plot from GBPaQ analysis.

The angle between scan lines is 0.5°. *α* **is the minimum GBSI density (scan line) angle.** *ɣ* is the maximum GBSI density (scan line) angle. $\overline{x}N(\theta)$ is the average GBSI density, in **GBSI per pixel.**

Figure C.15: Crystallographic orientation analysis of sample N4-1 (parallel to x axis of the core). a) Crystallographic orientation map with grain boundaries (>10° misorientation) in black, twin boundaries (83.5° / [100]) in red, and subgrain boundaries (2-10° misorientation) in yellow. b) Misorientation angle distribution.

Figure C.16: Crystallographic orientation analysis of sample N4-2 (perpendicular to x axis of the core). a) Crystallographic orientation map with grain boundaries (>10° misorientation) in black, twin boundaries (83.5° / [100]) in red, and subgrain boundaries (2-10° misorientation) in yellow. b) Misorientation angle distribution.
$\mathsf A$

 $2-10^o$ mis-
orientation

 $x \uparrow$
 $x \uparrow$ y,z

 Φ σ ¹ $\frac{1}{20}$

 \overline{B}

 C

Figure C.17: Crystallographic orientation analysis of sample Òdena quarry sample material from thin section AA-4T (perpendicular to x axis of the core). A (left side) and B (right side): Crystallographic orientation map with grain boundaries (>10° misorientation) in black, twin boundaries (83.5° / [100]) in red, and subgrain boundaries (2-10° misorientation) in yellow. C: Misorientation angle distribution.

Figure C.18: Misorientation profiles i) and ii) based on the crystallographic orientation map from Figure C.17.

Figure C.19: Histograms of relative frequency versus uncorrelated misorientation angles and *M***-index based on calculations using the** *M***-file script of Phil Skemer (2005) for an orthorhombic crystal system (i.e. anhydrite). The datasets are based on EBSD maps from Zechstein anhydrite samples and Òdena anhydrite. a) is based on the EBSD map shown in Appendix C, Fig. C.8. b) shows the analysis of the map from Fig. 12, c) of map from Fig. C.15, d) of map of Fig. C.16, e) of the map shown in Fig. 4.16 and Fig. C.17, and f) of the map shown in Appendix D Fig. D.5. Table C.5 lists the uncorrelated misorientation angles used to calculate the histograms and** *M***-index.**

C.2 Tables

Table C.1: List with misorientations that were disregarded for the crystallographic orientation analysis with Channel 5 software Tango.

Table C.2: Sample characteristics of cores of North Sea anhydrite and Òdena quarry samples, including core diameter, length, area, volume, and weight.

Table C.3: Permeability measurements via steady-state flow method using N2,

Klinkenberg corrected)

In Gauge, Out Menis

PERMEABILITY MEASUREMENTS MADE USING THE INLET PRESSURE GAUGE (RANGE 0-0 Psi) AND THE TRAVELLING MENISCUS FLOWMETER (min & sec)

In Gauge, Out Menis

In Gauge, Out Menis

Permeability measurements of the core material after ultrasonic velocity measurements suggest that the permeability of the Òdena quarry samples is slightly higher (0.003 mD, 0.007 mD, and 0.008 mD; steady-state flow method using N_2 , Klinkenberg corrected) than that of North Sea anhydrite (0 mD to 0.005 mD, with four samples between 0.001 mD and 0.003 mD) (Appendix C, Table C.2,3) for methods and results of permeability analysis). However, permeability measurements were performed on surfaces that had been coated by the lubricant gel for better contact of

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the transducers and cleaning did not remove the gel completely, indicating that the permeability should be higher than measured. Despite this, it can be assumed that the Òdena quarry samples have higher permeability than the North Sea samples and that the overall permeability of both sample suites is relatively low.

In summary, the anhydrite samples with gypsum content have slower P- and S-wave velocities, and low AV_P and AV_S anisotropies (2 %) parallel to the long axis of the cores (X), and permeability.

Table C.4: Sample characteristics of cuboids from Boulby mine (Ba-7.2, potash; BP-1.2 polyhalite; BH-5.1, halite with clay; BH-2.2 pure halite) and North Sea anhydrite (N2- 1, pure anhydrite), including cuboid dimensions (*lx, ly, lz***), mass (***M***), volume (***V***), and density (***ρ***).**

 I_{xy} , M, V, ρ

APPENDIX D

Supplementary material to chapter 5

D.1 Figures

50 µm, WD = 15.04 mm, BC = 1 nA, LE BSE, EHT = 15 keV, AA-3

50 µm, WD = 15.12 mm, BC = 1 nA, LE BSE, EHT = 20 keV, AA-4T

Figure D.1: Electron backscatter images of Òdena anhydrite. A: gypsum vein in anhydrite, sample Ò8. B: Gypsum vein next to a spherulite with gypsum in the centre and between grains, sample Ò8. C: Gypsum vein in anhydrite, sample Ò8. D: Gypsum vein cutting through spherulites, sample not used for experiments.

Figure D.2: Electron backscatter maps of Òdena anhydrite. A: Gypsum vein systems, sample not used for experiments. B: Map of sample Ò3.

Figure D.3: Electron backscatter images of Òdena anhydrite sample Ò2.

Figure D.4: Electron backscatter diffraction analysis of initial Òdena anhydrite sample material. See Fig. 5.2c) and d) for IPFx EBSD map and equal area, lower hemisphere pole figures of anhydrite. Step size was 4 µm.

Figure D.5: Electron backscatter diffraction analysis of initial Òdena anhydrite sample material, including equal area, lower hemisphere pole figures of anhydrite. Step size was 10 µm.

Figure D.6: Photographs of additional samples Fig. 5.2a and Fig. D.7a of post-experiment cores after undergoing all three test modes.

Figure D.7: Post-experimental mechanical results of Zechstein anhydrite samples. a) Photographs of post-experiment cores after undergoing all three test modes. b) Stress versus strain curves, strain (%) in the shortening direction $\mathbf{x}(\sigma_{1})$ **on the x-axis is plotted against differential stress (***σdiff***, axial stress/radial pressure) on the y-axis. Stress and strain values are in digital Appendix D.**

Figure D.8: Failure behaviour of Zechstein anhydrite and Òdena quarry samples during triaxial experiments. A: lists the point of failure, determined via analysis of the differential stress vs. strain curve analysis (Figure 5.3 and Figure D.7). h.c. = steady state differential compaction mode tests. $\dot{\epsilon}$ = strain rate, σ_{diff} = differential stress, σ_{eff} = effective stress, σ_n = normal stress, σ_s = shear stress. B and C: resulting failure envelopes.

 $\overline{\mathsf{A}}$

Figure D.9: Analysis of ultimate strength and yield point, based on mechanical data and stress vs. strain curves (Figure 5.3 and Figure D.7).

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Figure D.10: Stress (*σdiff***) vs. strain behaviour of all steady state differential compaction tests.** Left: stress vs. strain curves. $B =$ Steady state differential compaction, $D = \dot{\varepsilon}$ **applied; and C = reapplication of** ̇**. Middle: stress vs. strain behaviour during B. Red lines mark beginning/ end. Right: differential stress, strain, and room temperature (***RT***) evolution.**

Figure D.11: Reflected light microscopy images of a thin section of sample Ò3 (post 'wet' mode experiment) with areas marked for further analysis. Area 1 covers the same location seen in Fig. 5.4 and 5.5. and is part of a ~ 2.7 cm long vein system. The following figures show results from electron backscatter diffraction analysis of the marked areas.

 $\sigma_{\scriptscriptstyle\! f} \longrightarrow \; \leftarrow \sigma_{\scriptscriptstyle\! f}$

Figure D.12: Additional electron backscatter diffraction analysis from the area of sample Ò3 ('wet' mode experiment) shown in Fig. 5.4 and 5.5 and marked as Area 1 in Fig. D.11.

 σ _, \rightarrow \leftarrow σ _,

Figure D.13: Grain reference orientation deviation (GROD) maps of anhydrite from the Area 1 electron backscatter diffraction dataset of Ò3 ('wet' mode experiment) (Fig. 5.4 and 5.5; Area 1 in Fig. D.11). GROD analysis shows orientation heterogeneities that form during deformation, and hence displays internal deformation of grains. Each pixel is coloured based on the misorientation of the point relative to a reference orientation for the grain to which the point belongs to. Component limits (GROD angle) were at a range of 0 to 45° for A and to 0 to 20° for B. Exclusion of higher angles results in loss of data and is more sensitive to low angle heterogeneities.

GROD analysis shows that the blocky area has slightly higher internal deformation, with angles $~40^{\circ}$ in one large grain and $~20^{\circ}$ in surrounding grains. The rest of the anhydrite appears heterogeneous, with GROD angles commonly between 0 and 15°.

Figure D.14: Grain reference orientation deviation (GROD) maps of vein-hosted gypsum from the Area 1 electron backscatter diffraction dataset of Ò3 (post 'wet' mode experiment) (Fig. 5.4 and 5.5, Area 1 in Fig. D.11.). Component limits (GROD angle) were at a range of 0 to 25° for A and to 0 to 15° for B. Exclusion of higher angles results in loss of data and is more sensitive to low angle heterogeneities.

Summary grain statistics

Figure D.15: Grain statistical data and one point per grain, equal area, lower hemisphere pole figures of gypsum from analysis of the electron backscatter diffraction data set of Area 1 in sample Ò3 (post 'wet' mode experiment).

Figure D.16: Electron backscatter diffraction analysis of gypsum veins (Area 2) in anhydrite from sample Ò3 (post 'wet' mode experiment) (marked as Area 2 in Fig. D.11).

Summary grain statistics

Pole figures - anhydrite

Figure D.17: Grain statistical data and equal area, lower hemisphere pole figures of anhydrite and gypsum from analysis of the electron backscatter diffraction data set of Area 2 (Fig. D.11, and D.16) in sample $\dot{\text{O}}3$ (post 'wet' mode experiment). (y = z = y,z).

Figure D.18: Electron backscatter diffraction analysis of a gypsum vein in anhydrite from Area 3 (Fig. D.11) in sample Ò3 (post 'wet' mode experiment).

Summary grain statistics

Pole figures - anhydrite

Figure D.19: Grain statistical data and equal area, lower hemisphere pole figures of anhydrite and gypsum from analysis of the electron backscatter diffraction dataset of Area 3 (Fig. D.11 and D.18) in sample $\dot{O}3$ (post 'wet' mode experiment). $(y = z = y, z)$.

Figure D.20: Reflected light microscopy images of a thin section of sample Ò2 (post ssdc mode experiment) with areas marked where further analysis was done. The area marked as Figure 5.6 ? is an estimate, as the thin section was polished for EBSD between imaging.

Figure D.21: Backscatter electron images of Ò2 after ssdc. Image 4: shear fracture map, location marked in Figure D.20. Image 5: ~ 100 µm wide polishing pit (gypsum vein that lost gypsum due to polishing), and spherulitic radial anhydrite laths. Image 6: cataclastic

zone with shear bands between the open shear fracture (no matrix, filled with clasts). A long fracture divides the cataclastic zone (Image 6) from the intact fabric of Image 7.

1 mm; WD 15.35 mm

500 µm; WD 15.35 mm

LAM Area1_0_1

500 µm; WD 15.35 mm

LAM Area1_1_1

■ 500 µm; WD 15.35 mm

500 µm; WD 15.35 mm

500 µm; WD 15.35 mm

500 µm; WD 15.35 mm

500 µm; WD 15.35 mm

LAM Area1_8_1

500 µm; WD 15.35 mm

Figure D.22: Backscatter electron panorama of a cataclastic shear zone in Ò2 after steady state differential compaction. A: Panorama, B to F single panorama frames. Light grey: anhydrite, medium grey: gypsum, black: open fractures. A mixed matrix of < 100 µm sized gypsum and anhydrite particles contains up to millimetre-scale anhydrite clasts with intense internal fracturing and low gypsum content. The amount of gypsum is difficult to identify from the images, as the sample lost gypsum due to polishing. The location of the panorama is marked as Panorama Area (LAM) in Figure D.20.

Crystallographic orientation map

 0.5 mm; $2 \mu m$ step

Figure D.23: Electron backscatter diffraction analysis of a cataclastic shear zone and surrounding fabric with spherulites in sample Ò2 after steady state differential compaction. Gypsum was not detected, due to polishing pits.

Figure D.24: Second part of backscatter diffraction analysis of a cataclastic shear zone in sample Ò2 (see Fig. D.23). Equal area, lower hemisphere pole figures of anhydrite based on the complete dataset and based on 1 point per grain subset.

Figure D.26: Phase content analysis via greyscale threshold (ImageJ) from A: backscatter electron Image 5 of Òdena quarry sample Ò8 (AA-3). B: Greyscale threshold settings defined to quantify %. $S\text{rO}_x$ = strontium oxides. C: Image 5 with all pixels that **fall into the gypsum threshold in red. See table D.1 for further results.**

Figure D.27: Phase content analysis via greyscale threshold (ImageJ) from A: backscatter electron Image 6 of Òdena quarry sample Ò8 (AA-3). B: Greyscale threshold settings defined to quantify %. SFO_x **= strontium oxides. C: Image 6 with all pixels that fall into the gypsum threshold in red. See table D.1 for further results.**

Figure D.28: Phase content analysis via greyscale threshold (ImageJ) from A: backscatter electron Image 1 of Òdena quarry sample Ò2 (BA-4) after steady state differential compaction (ssdc). The section where Image 1 was taken is from a part of the sample that shows no sign of shear fractures. B: Greyscale threshold settings defined to quantify %. SrO^x = strontium oxides. C: Image 1 with all pixels that fall into the gypsum threshold in red. See table D.1 for further results. The location of the image is marked as 'Image 1' in Figure D.20.

D.2 Tables

Table D.1: Phase content greyscale threshold analysis on four backscatter electron images from two Òdena quarry samples from sections with no visible impact from deformation or hydration. Image 1 is from BA-4h (Ò2) after steady state differential compaction, but from a section that shows no sign of hydration through the experiment. Figures D.25, D.26, D.27, and D.28 present the Images and thresholds used for the analysis. Hal = halite, gyp = gypsum, dol = dolomite, SrO^x = strontium oxide phase, black = open fractures. Deviation = difference between the image area and the sum of the pixels that were sorted by the greyscale threshold. SUM is the content calculated by adding phase area up, meaning that the different images were treated as one. Mean is the statistic mean of all four grey scale threshold case studies, and STDEV is the corresponding standard deviation. The marked values (bold) are the data presented as initial material phase content for Òdena quarry anhydrite in chapter 5 (Figure 5.6c).

